



THE INDEPENDENT

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WEATHER: Sunny breaks

(R65p) 60p

Cheap Chic: how £50 can buy you seven fabulous outfits
thelongweekend

Karen Kristanovich: Bridge is the new rock'n'roll
New column page 18



Pete Sampras: how to win at Wimbledon
the magazine



Drumcree gets ready for battle

Michael Streeter and David McKitterick

Senior Orangemen in Portadown have rejected calls to re-route Sunday's march away from a nationalist area as the province braces itself for a weekend of tension and potential violence.

Orange sources in the town poured scorn on an appeal by Orange Grandmaster Robert Saulters not to parade along the predominantly nationalist Garvaghy Road. One said: "To say we are antagonistic to that view is an understatement."

Later Mr Saulters, who has no formal say in the decision on marching, changed direction by conceding the "no parade" option would be unacceptable following remarks earlier in the week by new Irish premier Bertie Ahern in which he opposed forcing the parade through.

Mr Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, last night appealed to Portadown Orangemen to listen to the "voices of reason". Speaking at Stormont Castle, she said: "I recognise the tensions in both communities are increasing and people in both communities are in need of reassurance. Let me say very clearly that no decision has yet been taken, we are continuing our efforts to find an accommodation that both communities can live with. For the good of everyone and for the sake of peace in the next few weeks I urge those in the

Portadown Orange Order to listen to those voices of reason." A spokesman for the Northern Ireland Office meanwhile insisted that the Secretary of State had not given up hope of a settlement. Yesterday morning she met leaders of the Orange Order from County Armagh, and was thought to be in contact with representatives from the Garvaghy Road.

On Thursday evening, she held lengthy talks on security



A sign on the Garvaghy Road. Photograph: Peter Macdonald

contingency plans with Royal Ulster Constabulary Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan, and Lt Gen Sir Rupert Smith, head of the Army in the province.

If, as many expect, the last-minute attempts to find an accommodation fail, then Ms Mowlam and Mr Flanagan will

today announce their decision on whether the ban the contentious part of the annual parade. The signs are that the march will be allowed through under heavy police and army protection in an attempt to avoid the disastrous scenes of last year when Orangemen brought the province to a standstill during a five-day stand-off at Drumcree. Some Orangemen believe, however, that Ms Mowlam may ban the parade following the intervention of the Irish government.

Pressure on the Northern Ireland Secretary increased yesterday when Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble urged her to respect the right of free assembly and movement on the highway. He said: "Government should not ban peaceful citizens from exercising these rights in a non-provocative manner at the behest of those who threaten violence."

In an attempt to reduce tensions, Orangemen have offered to scale down the event by playing no music along the disputed route, reducing the number of Union flags to one and keeping out politicians. Local nationalists, however, oppose the parade in any form and despite appeals yesterday, from churchmen for compromise for both sides, the gap between them seemed as wide as ever. Nationalist residents in Garvaghy Road have already drawn up plans to try and block the parade if it is given the go-ahead. Comment, page 19

Whitney saved from orphanage exile



Happy together: Whitney Forrester and her father Gilroy celebrating the Home Office decision to allow her remain in Britain. Photograph: Kalpesh Lathiga

Glenda Cooper
Social Affairs Correspondent

Whitney Forrester was cross at having to miss school yesterday to have her photograph taken. But it was a very special occasion: finally the threat of being sent away from her father, Gilroy, to an orphanage 3,000 miles away had been lifted.

She was to have been returned to Jamaica in March, despite pleas from Mr Forrester, who has lived in Britain for nearly seven years, that he was able and

willing to care for her. Once there, as her mother had abandoned her, she would have been placed in a children's home. Yesterday the Home Office minister Mike O'Brien confirmed that she was allowed to remain.

"I am smiling today and so is Whitney," said a joyful Mr Forrester. "She understood what was happening and was very disturbed by the idea of being separated from me and her brother, Adrian. It would have been unbearable if she had been sent back to an institution

where she knew nobody." The Home Office said in March that she was being returned to Jamaica because she did not apply for entry clearance from the British High Commission in Kingston. The family said it was unaware such a procedure was necessary, particularly since Whitney's stay was not originally intended to be permanent.

She came to visit her father in Tottenham, north London, last October. Last year, her mother abandoned her after her new fiancé refused to support the

child and Whitney's aunt looked after her instead. But while Whitney was in Britain, her aunt said that she would no longer be able to care for her. Her deportation was deferred after solicitors for her family had claimed that Jamaican social services were not aware that her father was willing to care for her and yesterday it was finally confirmed that could stay. The decision was welcomed as a "victory for common sense" by Mr Forrester's MP, Bernie Grant, who had campaigned on the family's behalf.

Furore over fake Van Goghs: Is this one of them?

Jojo Moyes

The art world reacted swiftly yesterday to quash claims that *Sunflowers*, the world-famous painting by Vincent Van Gogh which was sold by auctioneers Christie's for £24.75m in 1987, could be a fake.

The *Art Newspaper* alleged in a special investigation that up to 100 paintings and drawings had been wrongly attributed to the Dutch artist. The evidence came from an examination of several scholars' studies by Martin Bailey, an expert on the artist. The allegation in the respected specialist publication brought a terse response from Christie's. "We have seen the story and there is no reason to question the authenticity of the picture," it said in a statement.

Experts at Amsterdam's Van Gogh Museum were also unconvinced by the allegations. "These works have been declared fakes on the basis of very shaky provenance. They should not be a reason to put a question mark against them," said Sjraar van Heugpen, curator of paintings and drawings.

"You have to do a lot more research, both stylistically and technically, before you can say that... We do not want to enter a discussion that we do not consider fair or trustworthy." Sixteen of the 45 works in question are at the Van Gogh Museum itself.

But the article quoted renowned expert, Jan Hulsker, who said 45 works listed as Van Gogh's were fakes and he was "very doubt-



"Christine Hamilton", not necessarily by Van Gogh. Her story is on page 8.

ful" about many more. The article also cast into doubt the authenticity of a study of the doctor who cared for Van Gogh, which fetched a record price of £48.8m in 1990. None of the contested works is thought to hang in the National Gallery in London, which has five Van Goghs on show. There has been a long-running debate as to the provenance of many of Van Gogh's works. The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam receives about 150 requests for authentication

of his work every year, but only a tiny fraction of those are ever deemed to be genuine. Experts say there are about 900 Van Gogh paintings and 1,200 drawings known to be in existence, and that they do not expect to find many more. The *Art Newspaper* notes: "The crux of the matter is that Van Gogh sold virtually no works in his lifetime and consequently there is no commercial proof of provenance or authorship." Leading article, page 17

Robots on Mars spark space fever

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Almost 30 years after the Moon landings, the world - or more precisely, prime-time American TV - was last night gripped by space fever once more, as man (or at least, a robot) returned to Mars.

There were shouts of joy in the mission control room at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena as *Pathfinder*, with its valuable "Mars Buggy" cargo, ended its epic, 309-million mile (497million km) journey by landing on the planet just after 6pm BST - about 3am, Mars time. A signal was received last night indicating that the craft survived the impact, but scientists were anxiously waiting to see if all the systems were functioning.

It wasn't a very dignified arrival. The *Mars Pathfinder* rocket, containing a tiny six-wheeled Mars rover, was expected to fall at a speed of about 90 kilometres per hour through the thin atmosphere, inflate four giant airbags when 80 metres above the ground, and fire retro-rockets. That was not expected to stop its fall completely: a minute's bouncing and rolling was also expected.

Then the *Pathfinder* was programmed to open out and let

the 10-kilogram Sojourner rover roll out across the dusty, rocky plains of the *Ares Vallis* flood plain just as the Martian dawn broke.

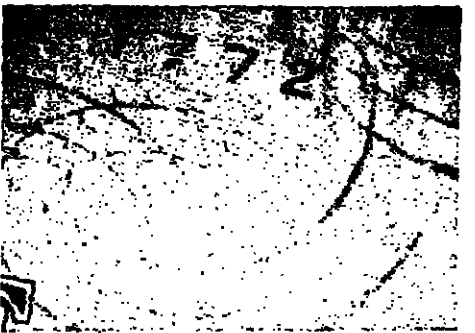
In a masterpiece of timing, the TV signals beamed back from the rover - showing everything from *Pathfinder's* solar panels to the distant horizon - were due to arrive early in the evening, just in time for Americans to lap up the first-ever live pictures from the Red Planet. All being well, live pictures will be shown on BBC2 this morning from 8-10am.

Sojourner will move about at just under 1.13 cm per second. It will take colour pictures and examine minerals in the rocks and soil: *Pathfinder*, meanwhile, will sit back and enjoy the view, sending back pictures and data on the atmosphere.

Pathfinder is the first US spacecraft dispatched to Mars since the \$1bn (£600m) *Mars Observer* disappeared from NASA radar screens in August 1993, and the first mission designed to land there since the *Viking 2* probes set down in 1976. To the disappointment of many, *Viking* found no traces of life. It is most likely that those excited last year by apparent traces of life in a Martian meteorite will be disappointed too.



STROKE



MASTERSTROKE

HEAVY ROYAL REGATTA	2-9 July
5th CROWNIAL TEST MATCH v AUSTRALIA, GLEN TRAFALGAR	5-7 July
THE ROYAL PACIFIC OF THE 1100S	5 July
HAMPTON COURT PALACE INTERNATIONAL FLOWER SHOW	9-13 July
BETHUN GREEN PARK, SILVERSTONE	13 July
125th OPEN GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP, ROYAL TRON	17-20 July
FINAL VEGETABLE CUP, COMBAT PARK	20 July
CARLTON & CO. CHURCH	29 July-2 August
COVERS WEEK	2-9 August
LA FESTA DELA QUIN' SATURDAY, GREAT MALTA	1-4 October



Veuve Clicquot
CHAMPAGNE OF THE SEASON

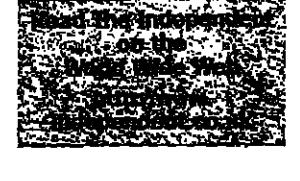


Britons are quids in
Britons travelling in Europe yesterday found their money worth 20 per cent more than last year as sterling hovered on the 10 francs to the pound mark. Page 3

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significant shorts

Clampdown on high-dose vitamin pills announced

Plans were announced yesterday to force makers to limit levels of vitamin B6 in dietary supplements, amid health fears over "mega-dose" pills. Experts have warned prolonged exposure to high levels of the vitamin could cause nerve damage leading to numbness, clumsiness and tingling.

But critics claimed the proposed 10 milligram daily dose was "ridiculously low" and a blow to thousands of women using doses of up to 200mg a day to combat PMS and depression. The legislation, announced by food safety minister Jeff Rooker, follows an investigation by the independent Food Advisory Committee.

Most dietary supplements already comply with the 10mg dose limit which is still five times the recommended daily dose. The high dose supplements - which would only be available on prescription if the laws go ahead - are used mainly by women to combat premenstrual tension but also to treat some hyper-active children.

Hand over 'fat cat' papers says judge

A High Court judge yesterday told *Marketing Week*, the magazine which broke the story of National Lottery operator Camelot's "fat cat" pay deal for its directors, that it had to hand back a leaked document so that Camelot might identify the source of the leak.

Stuart Smith, editor of *Marketing Week*, said the magazine would appeal the judge's ruling and "exhaust every legal remedy to prevent the document being handed back". It will now take the case to the Court of Appeal.

Child killing conviction overturned

A man was freed by the Court of Appeal yesterday after his conviction for killing a three-year-old boy was declared unsafe.

Paul Esslemont, now 21, allegedly half-strangled Carl Kennedy with the child's Aston Villa shirt and then rained 15 blows on his face with a weapon, rendering him unrecognisable. Yesterday he wept in the dock as Lord Justice Leggatt said that in the light of fresh evidence his conviction was not safe. Mr Esslemont, who lived near the little boy in Willenhall, Coventry, was acquitted of murder in May 1993 but found guilty of manslaughter, by a majority of 10 to two. He was sentenced to eight years' detention.

Skye bridge protesters not satisfied

Tolls for the islanders of Skye using the new road bridge were halved yesterday - but campaigners vowed to fight on for their complete abolition.

The action group, Skye and Kyle Against Tolls, claims the announcement by Donald Dewar, the Secretary of State for Scotland, missed the point of their 15-month battle. The 50 per cent cut brings the price of a car journey down to £1.25. Commercial vehicles will pay £18.95 and buses will pay £11.45.

Shipwreck 'traumatic and horrific'

The wrecking of the 137-year-old square-rigger *Maria Asumpta* on the north Cornwall coast was a "traumatic and horrific experience", a court heard yesterday from the crewman who was at the helm as she ran aground on a submerged rock.

Three of the 14 crew died as the 125ft-long wooden vessel - then the world's oldest working sailing ship - was smashed to pieces near the end of her voyage to Padstow on May 30, 1995.

Helmsman John Howells was giving evidence at the trial of her owner-skipper Mark Litchfield, 56, of Bodely, Kent, who has denied three manslaughter charges arising from the deaths after the ship hit Rumps Point.

Lift tragedy of 25-stone woman

A woman plunged to her death in a lift after the cable snapped under her weight, and inquest was told yesterday. The elevator carried 25-stone wheelchair-bound Peggy Hitchen, 78, into her bedroom from the downstairs living room of her home.

But she died after a steel cable severed in April. Her grandson Alex, 13, raised the alarm after he found her lying in agony in her lift. Mrs Hitchen died in Musgrove Park hospital in Taunton, Somerset, hours later from massive internal bleeding.

Yesterday her son Pete, 44, said: "It was extremely difficult to get her out. In the end nine of us including my wife and our son used a huge carrying sheet to get her out."

Oasis record leak may end in court

Oasis' record company Creation Records is considering proceedings for breach of trust against two radio stations after the band's new single 'D'You Know What I Mean' was leaked in advance of its release date this week. Creation called in the police to investigate the leaks and City FM in Liverpool and Forth FM in Edinburgh confessed that they had made secret recordings of the single when it was played to them by Creation's plugging company.

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NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 41.2% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1996

people



Sir Simon Rattle and the violinist Nigel Kennedy in rehearsal in Birmingham yesterday for a performance of Elgar's *Violin Concerto in B Minor* tonight, to mark the centenary of EMI Records. Kennedy will then record the piece for a commemorative album (Photograph: Andrew Beaumont)

The 12-year-old mother who was 'just experimenting'

A 12-year-old girl, believed to be Britain's youngest mother, received an "excellent" sex education at school, her local education authority said yesterday. The girl, from Poole, Dorset, fell pregnant at 11, while at primary school, and gave birth in April, two terms into her secondary education. The father is a 13-year-old boy who lives near her home.

She did not realise she was pregnant, according to reports, and was taken to see a doctor by her mother after complaining of stomach pains. Five days later, she gave birth to a 7lb 4oz daughter. A relative said that the girl and her boyfriend were "just experimenting" with sex and that she had "no idea" of the consequences.

The girl was off school for six weeks and received home tuition. She is now back in class and, according to Poole borough council, "settling down well to her studies".

A spokeswoman for the council said that, while at primary school, she would have learnt about the mechanics of conception by the age of 10.

In a statement, the council said all its schools were regularly inspected to ensure they provided "effective" sex education. It said its teachers had been trained extensively, adding: "The Department for Education and Employment has reported that this training is excellent."

The girl, who gave birth by emergency Caesarean, has been quoted as saying: "My baby is gorgeous and I love him to bits. She has blonde curly hair and lovely blue eyes. My mum and dad have been great."

Her father described himself as a "proud granddad". "It's been difficult, but we are behind her," he said. "We don't care what others think. We are a close family and will get through it."

The girl's 35-year-old mother will be the baby's legal guardian until she reaches 16. The birth was registered when the baby was 22-days-old; the father is not named on the birth certificate.

Ann Weyman, chief executive of the Family Planning Association, said 12-year-old mothers were extremely rare, and that the number of teenage pregnancies was falling. A spokeswoman for Brook Advisory Centres said sex education in school needed to be more relevant to real life.

Diana's little black dress is a little too little

Hanging in a wardrobe in Glasgow is a £39,098 chiffon dress that has never been worn by its owner.

Brieg Mackenzie recently picked up the little black number in a New York auction house, but has since realised she cannot quite squeeze into it.

The trouble is that the frock is second-hand, and the previous owner is svelte Diana, Princess of Wales.



The dress, which Diana wore to the Serpentine Gallery on the night the Prince of Wales went on television and admitted adultery, is a size 10.

Forty-four-year-old Mrs Mackenzie however is a couple of sizes larger. But the mother-of-three, of Bridge of Weir, Renfrewshire, has no plans to go on a crash diet.

"I am not some rich bitch pretending she's a princess by buying one of her dresses to prance around cocktail parties in."

"I can't fit into it, but that's not really the idea in this instance. We bought it to raise funds for the charity Children 1st," she said.

Mrs Mackenzie and her husband Graeme, thought that by purchasing one of the dresses they could benefit their favourite charity.

Orton papers to stay in Britain

An historic collection of playwright Joe Orton's papers will remain in Britain, following a university's "race against time" to stop them going on the open market.

Leicester University raised £80,000 to secure the papers, which include typescripts, notes and unpublished works from the controversial author of *Entertaining Mr Sloane*, *Loot*, and *What the Butler Saw*.

It launched its appeal on 14 February, to secure, house and conserve the papers, which were being held by Orton's family. The university was given a deadline of 30 June, after which the papers would have gone on the open market, and possibly left the country.

Leicester University librarian Dr Timothy Hobbs said yesterday that the purchase had been "a tremendous achievement and a triumph for those who wish to preserve our great literary heritage."

"These papers will now be retained in Joe Orton's birthplace and will provide enormous benefits for students, scholars and people interested in learning more about the playwright," he added.

The papers, he added, offered "fascinating insights" into the mind of a "very anti-establishment figure".

briefing

EDUCATION

Manifesto nursery pledge may be hard to fulfil

Some parts of the country may fail to hit government targets of providing a nursery place for all four-year-olds by September 1998, ministers have admitted.

In draft guidance to local authorities on how the manifesto pledge will be carried out, officials acknowledge that for some the target will pose "a significant challenge". Even in those areas, the Government will be looking for "considerable progress", the guidelines say.

As *The Independent* disclosed yesterday, the guidance also proposes backing up the Government's manifesto pledge of a nursery place for every child with legislation to compel LEAs to ensure education is provided for all four and, eventually, three-year-olds.

The proposals follow Labour's abolition of the nursery voucher scheme introduced by the Conservative government.

HEALTH

Soya milk packed with hormones

Babies fed on soya-based milk are exposed to doses of hormone-like chemicals up to 11 times higher than those known to biologically affect adults, it was claimed yesterday.

According to a study in the medical journal *The Lancet*, infants given soya milk take in a 13,000-22,000 higher concentration of the plant oestrogen hormones than those fed on cow's milk or breast milk.

Researchers concluded this must have some biological effect on the babies - but as yet they do not know what they are. The report said: "Long-term follow-up studies are needed to assess the potential benefit or adverse effects of phyto-oestrogens exposure early in life."

To date there is no evidence that soya-based milk, which has been used for more than 30 years, causes any harm to infants. Some evidence suggests phyto-oestrogens may even be beneficial.

RELIGION

Young turn back on moral message

Schools are spending more time on religious education, but the increase is not helping pupils' spiritual development, according to a study published yesterday.

The Ofsted report found that nine out of 10 primary schools and eight out of 10 secondaries surveyed were meeting their legal duty to teach RE to all pupils, except those withdrawn by their parents. Only a year ago, more than half of schools nationally were breaking the law, with secondaries the worst offenders.

However, the Ofsted study of 14 local education authorities found that, despite many improvements, there were still some weaknesses in the quality of teaching and courses. Though most pupils were now learning the facts about a range of faiths, schools were not using the lessons to encourage moral and spiritual development, the report said. "While pupils are learning about religion few are learning from religion."

Teaching was also variable within schools, with some staff unenthusiastic about teaching RE. The report recommended schools consider using specialist staff to teach a range of classes.

Lucy Ward

ATTITUDES

Bad news abroad for British women

British women were given an emphatic thumbs-down by European men in a magazine survey published yesterday. Foreign men are said to believe that the average British woman drinks too much, spends too little time on her looks and is more easily seduced than her continental counterpart.

Indeed the opinions, published in *Company* magazine, show that the stereotypical image of the British girl abroad still holds.

Gianluca, a 35-year-old Italian marketing manager, said: "As far as Italians are concerned, British women are white, not very clean, easy, and drink like fish." He said British girls look scruffy and have bad diets. "And it shows - the pear shape is always lurking. They should look after themselves better, it's worth it in the long run."

Fabrice, a corporate banker from France, said "Generally speaking, British women don't dress with taste."

The men did agree that the best thing about British women was their capacity for laughter. Gianluca said: "They're very good at taking the mickey out of themselves. They're much better at it than Italian girls, who are probably too busy looking after their clothes."

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سكرا من الاصل

Train to be a teacher in just three months

Lucy Ward
Education Correspondent

Would-be teachers will be able to train for the job in just a term under a new fast-track route to be launched by the Government.

The high-speed option, designed to tap the talents of mature graduates who may be switching to teaching from other jobs, slashes by up to two-thirds the year-long minimum training period required at present.

Under a second scheme, also unveiled yesterday, mature candidates who have already completed two years of higher

education will be able to gain both a degree and a teaching qualification after just one more year's study.

The new fast-track programmes, both aimed at candidates aged 24 or over, underline the level of government concern over the extent of the recruitment crisis in the teaching profession.

Recruitment into traditional teacher training courses is down 11 per cent this year, raising fears of a serious shortfall, particularly in science and maths.

Ministers are eager to stress that the new schemes, which will see candidates employed by schools as trainee teachers, will

How long does it take to learn to be...

Three months to train a teacher. How long for other careers?

Architect - degree plus four years to qualify (two-year diploma and professional exams)
Doctor - degree plus six more years' study and vocational training to become a GP
State Registered Nurse - three years to gain diploma (with A-levels or GNVQ)
Train driver - around six months

Airline pilot - gaining commercial pilot's licence then completing required minimum 155 hours flight training and 600 hours ground training usually takes several years
Chartered accountant - four years from A-levels or three years from degree
Civil engineer - seven years, including degree
Vet - degree plus two years' further university study

Research by Rosie Goodwin

be high-quality programmes despite their brevity.

However, teaching unions yesterday sounded alarm bells over the appropriateness of the fast-track approach.

David Hart, general secretary

of the National Association of Head Teachers, said: "We undoubtedly face a recruitment crisis which will only get worse, as we have to recruit teachers to meet the government's policy of cutting class sizes, but it would

be dangerous to abandon quality in the search for quantity."

Under the first fast-track route, the Graduate Teacher Programme, graduates will spend between a term and a year training in the classroom,

supported by a local university or teacher-training college.

A Department for Education and Employment spokeswoman stressed that those taking the minimum time would be rare, and would be likely to have previous experience, perhaps in a further education college.

Candidates taking the second route, the Registered Teacher Programme, will spend between a year and two years training in the classroom, but will also complete a course of academic study at a higher education institution.

School standards minister Estelle Morris, launching a consultation on the two schemes, said the Government wanted to

make use of the skills of mature candidates keen to take up teaching who might not be able to go through full-time training before starting work.

Schools and universities will tailor-make the training programmes. Trainees will be employed as unqualified teachers, on salaries starting at £10,000 but ranging as high as £16,000 if governors took relevant experience into account.

The National Union of Teachers warned the fast-track schemes would create problems for schools unless the Government provided significant resources to fund mentoring and support for trainees.

Here comes the 10 franc pound ... and Britons are fleeing to riches abroad

Steve Boggan and Tom Hampson

Britons travelling in Europe yesterday found their money worth at least 20 per cent more than last year as sterling rose to a six-year high and hovered on the psychological 10 francs to the pound mark.

Despite the absence of American traders on Independence Day, the pound peaked at 9.994 francs, sparking confident speculation that next week would see it break the 10 franc barrier for the first time since 1991.

The national mood might be upbeat with new Labour and a string of sporting successes bringing fresh optimism, but millions of Britons are heading abroad to cash in on the favourable exchange rates.

Holiday companies are reporting a 25 per cent increase in business on last year because of the strength of the pound and the miserable British weather. The Association of British Travel Agents (Abta) said that the upturn could lead to a record year - with 15 million people buying package holidays.

"Business is booming," said Jacqui Kirk, a spokeswoman for Thomas Cook. "The industry is 25 per cent up, but our outlets are experiencing a 45 per cent increase on last year. If you go anywhere in Europe at

the moment, you will find that your money goes much further."

According to Thomas Cook, £250 bought 39,703.500 Turkish liras yesterday, compared with 32,075,000 a year ago - a real increase in spending power of £115 per £250 exchanged. In Spain, £250 is worth £43.44 more than last year; in Greece it is worth £44.82 more; in Tunisia it is worth £44.94 more; and in Portugal the increase in value amounts to £38.11 per £250.

The result is much cheaper goods and

'If you go anywhere in Europe now, your money will go further'

services at your holiday destination. Research by Thomas Cook shows that an average three-course meal in Spain costs £8.80 this year, compared with £10.65 in 1996. In Greece, the saving is £2.55 on a similar meal, while in Portugal, holiday-makers will save about £1.30 per head.

Maxine Pancaldi, a spokeswoman for First Choice, Britain's third largest tour op-

erator, predicted an increase in sales of winter holidays, too. "Many people haven't actually cashed in on their building society windfalls yet, so we are expecting them to think about taking a second holiday later in the year or spending the money on that long-haul destination they've always fancied. The savings once you get there are really quite substantial, particularly for families," she said.

"It could be a record year," said Keith Berton, spokesman for Abta. "A number of favourable factors have come together to benefit the travel industry. Firstly, there is the strong pound, which is good news all round."

"Then there are the building society windfalls, which have given a lot of people an unexpected bonus to spend on luxuries like holidays. And there is the awful weather. That really matters. Two years ago, the weather here was beautiful and sales of holidays abroad slumped."

The strong pound now will also mean cheaper holidays next year because companies are negotiating next year's prices at the moment.

"Holiday companies are very competitive, so those savings will be passed on to the customer," said Mr Berton. The markets expect the 10 franc barrier to be broken next week, particularly if the Bank of England puts up interest rates to dampen the consumer boom.

"It is probably just a matter of time," said Kiti Juckes, head currency strategist at Nat West Markets. "If you have German interest rates at 3 per cent and French rates at about 3.1 per cent while ours are moving from 6.5 per cent northwards, it makes for a pretty high-octane mix."

Many observers were expecting the barrier to be broken yesterday, but a quiet day left it short by the tiniest fraction of a centime.

"If it hadn't been for the July 4th celebrations in America, and the lull caused by Wimbledon and the cricket here, then it might have made it," said Mr Juckes. "But it will probably make it next week."



Customers at Polly Magoo in Paris, where the strong pound is helping British travellers make the most of their holiday cash Photograph: Colin Pierce

How your holiday money goes further					
Currency	Exchange rate on 4 July 1996	£250 worth of currency	Exchange rate on 4 July 1997	£250 worth of currency	Year on year saving on the same currency purchase
Portuguese Escudo	244.1	£1,025	288	£72,000	38.11
Spanish Peseta	166.6	49,975	241.94	60,485	43.44
US Dollar	1.558	389.5	1.649	412.25	13.80
Tunisian Dinar	1,5215	380.36	1,855	463.75	44.94
Cyprus Pounds	0.7308	182.7	0.842	210.5	38.02
Turkish Lira	128,300	32,075,000	235,614	59,703,500	115.89
Greek Drachina	372.6	93,150	454	113,500	44.82
Italian Lira	2,380	595,000	2,806	701,500	37.95
Maltese Lira	0.5665	141.83	0.829	167	24.47
French Franc	8.015	2,003.75	9.67	2,417.5	42.79

Cardboard fizz in the can

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Perhaps now, teenagers will really be able to savour the green revolution. British engineers have developed a "cardboard can" which is able to hold fizzy drinks such as colas and beers without bursting.

The benefits are that instead of using non-renewable plastics, or expensive metals such as aluminium and steel, it is simply made of treated cellulose, like that used for milk cartons, with a very thin internal plastic skin to stop gas permeating through the container.

Tens of millions of drinks bottles and cans are used every year in Britain, but comparatively few are recycled - a major cost to the industry and consumers. The new device could be both eco-friendly and eventually lower the cost of canned drinks.

"The object was to make something like the Tetrapak for milk, but for fizzy drinks,"

said Richard Freeman, of Scientific Generics in Cambridge, who has been working on the design for 18 months. "Aluminium and steel are recyclable - but you can't grow more. And plastic bottles which use PET (a biodegradable plastic) are derived from oil, which is a strictly limited resource."

The new design, which is be-

ing discussed with a number of soft drinks manufacturers and brewers, comes in 500 millilitre "cans". They weigh about 50 grams, twice as much as metal cans.

"But the texture is very nice - it feels like wood, not cold like a can. And because it's effectively paper, you can print almost any design on to it -

you're not limited as you are with metals."

Producing prototypes of the can proved difficult. Most modern engineering designs are done by modelling them on a computer. But this was not possible with the cardboard, because too little is known about its properties under stress - a key requirement for computer-aided design.

Instead, the design team had to make various shapes and see how they stood up to the pressure of fizzy drinks - which can reach 70 pounds per square inch, equivalent to almost five times atmospheric pressure.

"We thought we would need rounded ends, but what the experiments showed that was weaker, and that actually a point works best," said Dr Freeman. "It's effectively a cylinder with outward-pointing cones at either end." The side of the packaging is extended so that the cones don't protrude past the outside of the can.



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BA6800-6999	BA4000-4199	BA6700-6749	BA7600-7949	BA8300-8450	
BA8200-8299	BA4600-4999	BA7501-7539	BA7950-7999	BA8700-8839	

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هكذا من الاصل

Methodists say: Don't hug thy neighbour

Claire Garner

For many churchgoers, the moment at which members of a congregation turn to their neighbours and offer a sign of peace – be it a handshake, a kiss, or a hug – can be an emotionally fortifying experience. But for others, the ritual is fraught with fears of being abused, according to a report by the Methodist Church.

In the past, people have raised objections to these gestures – known in most churches as "the Peace" – on theological grounds or because it offends their British reserve, but never before has it been identified as an opportunity for sexual harassment.

The Rev David Gamble, who chaired the Working Party which published the report entitled "Sexual Harassment and Abuse", said at the Methodist annual conference yesterday: "In one or two of the stories, people have said that someone who has been harassing people has used the sharing of the Peace as an opportunity to harass. The Peace is supposed to be a good moment of reconciliation, but for some it is actually a moment they fear because they worry about what someone is going to do with them."

In particular, those adults who have been abused as children find physical intimacy in church, be it during the Peace or at another time, "frightening and offensive... they would run a mile rather than be touched," said Mr Gamble.

But despite the dangers, Methodists have no plans to cancel the Peace, said Mr Gamble. "A society in which no one can touch each other in affection, support or comfort would be a very sad society," he said.

Instead, Methodists are endeavouring to spread the message that "What's OK for me may not be OK for you", as well as reviewing the church's disciplinary procedures.

"One of the biggest issues in the report – and the Peace is an example – is that boundaries are very important," said Mr Gamble, who is the Methodist Church's Family and Personal Relationship Secretary. "One of the sad things that happens is that people cross boundaries inappropriately. Sometimes this is intentional, sometimes it happens gradually and people hardly realise it's happening."

The working party received a total of 28 written submissions relating to some 20 episodes of harassment and a further 11 oral accounts. Under



Name change: Methodist 'district chairman', the Rev Christina Le Moignan, who could become Britain's first woman bishop if the church takes the decision to update its current terminology and introduce the new title

der the heading "Confusion of Intimacy," the report noted "it was apparent in some submissions that the context in which harassment took place was one where physically intimate gestures were in regular use. It is an acknowledged aspect of worship

and of the informal relationship within many faith communities that hugs, kisses and physical demonstrations of fellowship are part of the day-to-day culture. In a number of cases this behaviour provided the cover for acts of harassment while in other

ers it offered the conduit for greater physical intimacy."

The Peace, conducted before Communion is popular among the more fundamentalist and evangelical wing of the Church. But the more traditional churches prefer to use just

words. To Mr Gamble's mind, the Peace is a valuable part of a service. "More traditional churches say 'We don't like these new fangled things, but there are times when a hug makes me know I'm cared about in a way that no words could.'"

BA hit by new threat of strike action

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

A third group of workers at British Airways has voted in favour of industrial action as it emerged yesterday that the airline is losing millions of pounds because of the threat of strikes.

According to a confidential memorandum, senior managers calculated a fortnight ago that the company had already forfeited £60m worth of bookings. One manager estimated that the airline could lose around £400m if the disruption lasted into August – around half next year's projected profits.

As corporate travel agents switched customers away from BA flights, *The Independent* learnt that more than 3,500 ground staff belonging to the GMB general union had voted to join 9,000 members of the Transport and General Workers' Union colleagues in strikes over the sell-off of the airline's catering division. "The GMB members include key information technology personnel vital to the operation of the airline."

Both unions are considering proposals to soften the impact of the sell-off on catering staff. Many of the employees of the catering division have families in the Indian sub-continent and management has offered them additional guarantees about discount travel which can be worth thousands of pounds.

Catering staff are being balloted on the proposals and the result is due midweek.

A peace formula aimed at averting a separate three-day stoppage planned by 9,000 cabin crew is due to be discussed on Monday at the transport union's annual conference in Brighton. The action is due to begin at 6am on Wednesday.

Union officials believe a fresh company offer will do little to avert the industrial action and claimed it was little different to the original deal.

A BA spokesman confirmed that the airline was losing money but believed £60m was a considerable overestimate.

Royal Observatory will transfer to Edinburgh

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Astronomers at the Royal Greenwich Observatory (RGO) in Cambridge are considering staging a buyout, after the Government announced yesterday that it will begin winding down its operations after this year.

While their US counterparts celebrated the Mars *Pathfinder* mission, the mood was sombre at the RGO, where 100 jobs could be lost.

"I feel devastated. One twentieth of the cost of the Millen-

nium Experience at Greenwich, the original home of the observatory, would endow the RGO in perpetuity," said Dr Margaret Penston, one of the astronomers.

The announcement was the first major decision to be made by John Battle, the minister for science, energy and industry. On the advice of the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC), the main funding body for the field, he said yesterday that British astronomy work will be concentrated at the Royal Observatory, Edinburgh,

in a new UK Astronomy Technology Centre (UKATC), beginning from the end of this year.

But scientists were angry at the manner in which the news was released – in a written parliamentary answer, made available on Friday morning just when concentration on the Mars *Pathfinder* mission would be at a maximum.

"It's not very satisfactory from our point of view," said Neil Parker, deputy director of the RGO. "We have more or less been excluded from the decision. We have not been aware

of what the options on offer were or why they were made."

None of the staff is keen to move to Edinburgh, he said, describing it as a "retrograde step". PPARC said the recommendation, made by its council on 21 May, was unanimous.

The RGO was founded in the 17th Century by Charles II to help measure the Greenwich meridian on which Greenwich Mean Time is based. The original building, on the zero meridian in south London's Greenwich Park, is now a museum: the scientists moved to

Hertsmere Castle, East Sussex in 1948 when the glare from London became too bright. They moved again to Cambridge in 1990.

The Department of Trade and Industry described the closure as "reversing the privatisation of PPARC observatories" – a claim that brought derision from those who stand to lose their jobs. The "privatisation" was the Prior Options review process conducted last year – but cut short by the Tory administration as costs escalated and the election approached.



Edinburgh's observatory at the top of Calton Hill

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Amount you invest	% Gross	% Net	% Net	Amount you invest	% Gross	% Net	% Net
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POSTAL INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS				BRANCH INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS			
SELECT 60**				DEPOSIT 120 DAY ACCOUNT**			
(Annual Interest)				(Annual and Monthly Interest)			
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£50,000 - £99,999	6.50	5.52	-	£25,000 - £49,999	3.65	2.92	-
£25,000 - £49,999	6.50	5.48	-	£10,000 - £24,999	2.90	2.32	-
£10,000 - £24,999	6.75	5.40	-	£5,000 - £9,999	2.80	2.24	-
£500 - £9,999	0.50	0.40	-	£500 - £4,999	0.50	0.40	-
SELECT INSTANT**				DEPOSIT INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNT*			
(Monthly Interest)				(Annual Interest)			
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£50,000 - £99,999	6.50	5.52	-	£25,000 - £49,999	1.50	1.20	-
£25,000 - £49,999	6.50	5.20	-	£10,000 - £24,999	1.15	0.92	-
£10,000 - £24,999	6.40	5.12	-	£5,000 - £9,999	0.75	0.60	-
£500 - £9,999	0.50	0.40	-	£500 - £4,999	0.70	0.56	-
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£50,000 - £99,999	6.75	5.40	-	£25,000 - £49,999	0.80	0.64	0.64
£25,000 - £49,999	6.65	5.32	-	£10,000 - £24,999	0.65	0.52	0.52
£10,000 - £24,999	6.40	5.04	-	£5,000 - £9,999	0.60	0.48	0.48
£500 - £9,999	0.50	0.40	-	£500 - £4,999	0.55	0.44	0.44
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£25,000 - £49,999	6.65	5.32	-	£25,000 - £49,999	2.85	3.00	3.04
£10,000 - £24,999	6.40	5.04	-	£10,000 - £24,999	2.61	2.76	2.80
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£50,000 - £99,999	6.05	4.84	-	(£1 or more (Year 1))			
£25,000 - £49,999	6.00	4.80	-	(£1 or more (Years 1-4))			
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هكذا من الأصل

Drought stays, despite June's record rainfall

Nicholas Schoon
Environment Correspondent

Summer will be restarted next week, but the sun's long-awaited comeback will again raise the spectre of drought.

As the Meteorological Office forecast hot, dry conditions with temperatures as high as 24C (75F) next week, water companies and the Government's Environment Agency said that shortages were far from over. More than 2.5 million people are under hosepipe or sprinkler bans with no immediate prospect of them being lifted.

But people could be forgiven for being sceptical about the drought continuing. The Met Office says that June was the wettest since 1860, with more than double the average rainfall for the month. May, too, had well above average.

According to the Environment Agency, the flow in 22 of its 33 "indicator" rivers in England and Wales this week was above average for the time of year. So are reservoir levels across most of the two countries. Large tracts of north-east Scotland have been flooded.

After the wet, wet May and June the water companies can no longer claim that the last two years have been the driest since rainfall records began in the 18th century. The Met Office said that the 24-months beginning in July 1972 were drier. Furthermore, total rainfall in England

and Wales over the last nine months - which includes the crucial winter recharge period for reservoirs and groundwater - was only 9 per cent less than the long-term average for this period. Four of the nine months had above-average rainfall.

However, the water companies say heavy rainfall has come at the wrong time of year: the dry soil and fast-growing plants of summer prevent the recharging of the aquifers which supply 40 per cent of England and Wales' tapwater. Throughout the drought-prone south and east of England, the areas most reliant on groundwater, the water table is low for the time of year and at record lows in many locations.

We check aquifer levels at seven boreholes, and there has been no recovery at any," said a spokeswoman for Southern Water, whose sprinkler ban along the Sussex coastline covers 826,000 people.

"There's no way we can say the drought is over," said Mike Walker, head of policy for the Water Companies Association representing the smaller firms. It would only end once winter rainfall recharged the aquifers. The two other companies with sprinkler or hosepipe bans are Sutton and East Surrey, covering 280,000 people and Essex and Suffolk covering 1.5 million.

Nevertheless, the summer rain was very welcome because it had cut customers' demand for water by one-quarter com-

pared to the same period last year, eking out reserves.

Floods in and around Elgin, in Grampian, subsided yesterday leaving devastation behind. All but a handful of the 1,200 families evacuated from their homes managed to leave council-arranged temporary accommodation but most had to bed down with relatives or friends.

The wet and cold has imperilled the pea and runner-bean harvest, with growers worried that their pea yields could be cut in half by rotting vines and cracked skins unless warm, dry conditions return. The Met Office said that after some showers today next week would be warm, dry and sunny with the chance of thunderstorms at the end.

Holmes convention holds few mysteries for the faithful



Elementary dressing: An assistant adjusting a dummy's outfit in shop window at Crowborough, East Sussex, once home to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, where local residents have been encouraged to wear period costume for this week's Sherlock Holmes Festival. Photograph: Andrew Haddon

Stab victim's car 'was alone'

A young couple told a court yesterday how they saw Lee Harvey's white Ford Escort travelling alone along a country lane just before his fiancée Tracie Andrews allegedly killed him. They were travelling home from a Sunday night drink with friends on 1 December last year when they saw Mr Harvey's Escort RS Turbo 2000, they told Birmingham Crown Court.

Ms Andrews denies murdering her 25-year-old boyfriend, alleging he was the victim of a road rage-style attack. She says he was stabbed to death in a frenzied assault by the passenger of a mystery dark blue Ford Sierra which chased them along country lanes near her home.

Simon Baker and his girlfriend, Elaine Carruthers, both accountants, told the jury that

there was definitely no other vehicle following Mr Harvey's car as it travelled past them.

Mr Baker, who told the court that he remembered the dead man's car because of its sporty alloy wheels and rear spoiler, said that as he travelled home at about 10.35pm he noticed the Escort as he approached a T-junction.

When he pulled out of the junction, he saw the Escort was reversing behind him as though it had missed the junction.

Mr Baker denied any suggestion that there was another car in the vicinity, following the white Escort. He said: "I say that it is completely and utterly untrue. I definitely would have noticed another car at the junction."

The trial was adjourned.

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news

The MP, his wife and a web of deceit

How Hamilton dismissed cancer risk to children

Christian Wolmar
Westminster Correspondent

Edwina Currie, the former health minister, told the cash-for-questions inquiry how Neil Hamilton had been completely unimpressed by a set of photographs showing cancers that could be caused to young people by a product he was promoting.

In a letter to Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, published in the evidence accompanying the report, Mrs Currie recalls a meeting at her office in May 1988 to discuss the possible legalisation of Skoal Bandits, a form of chewing tobacco. The MPs included Neil Hamilton, Michael Brown, Eric Forth and Sir William Clarke, then the chairman of the Tories' backbench finance committee.

Both Mr Brown and Mr Hamilton were criticised in the Downey report published on Thursday for failing to declare payments and hospitality from United States Tobacco, the company that makes Skoal Bandits, and for not advising ministers and officials of their interest when lobbying on behalf of UST.

Since she was keen to promote a permanent ban – which was eventually introduced in late 1989 – she obtained photographs of a form of mouth and throat cancer which was known to be caused by Skoal Bandits. Her letter explains that it is a particularly virulent form of cancer and tends to attack young people, particularly in the cheek. She said it was "easily prevented by not permitting this product to be sold in the UK".

She said that Mr Hamilton and Mr Brown did most of the talking at the meeting.

Ms Currie adds that she knew most of those attending were paid by tobacco lobbyists: "Sir William (now Lord) Clarke in particular was believed to be very well paid in his capacity as chairman of the backbench Conservative finance committee since it would then be his job to lobby against tax increases on tobacco products."

Another letter, from Ms Currie's former boss in the Department of Health, David Mellor, assisted in scuppering the miscreant MPs by helping to ensure that Sir Gordon was able to conclude that the former MP did not declare his interest when lobbying their ministerial colleagues.

Mr Mellor, a strong opponent of what he calls "this noxious form of tobacco", who would have been prepared to give evidence against Mr Hamilton in *The Guardian* libel trial over the matter, said that he felt "very badly about" about receiving representations from Mr Hamilton and Mr Brown, who did not declare their interests.

He said: "It goes without saying that at no time did either Hamilton or Brown indicate that they were acting for United States Tobacco pursuant to any commercial agreement or inducement."

He was under the impression that they were pursuing these interests from a civil liberties perspective and adds: "I should certainly not have agreed to see them if I had had any reason to think they were acting as they did for commercial reasons."

Kenneth Clarke, the former chancellor, however, was less helpful to the inquiry. He claims not to have any memory of the events "except I remember the vigour with which Mr Hamilton pursued his campaign".

Mr Clarke did not want to give evidence to the Downey inquiry.



Influential: Christine Hamilton, who is linked to all the sleaze allegations which led to her husband Neil's downfall

Photograph: PA

No final reward for wife at heart of Tory sleaze

Jojo Moyes

Christine Hamilton has always been portrayed as the most loyal of Tory wives. But it is in her role within the cash-for-questions affair that the Hamiltons' adage "We Do Things Together" really applies.

For at the end of almost every strand of the sleaze allegations, it is possible to find Mrs Hamilton. She is at the epicentre of what has been called the "web of influence" that prompted the Downey inquiry into her husband's downfall.

A long-time Commons secretary, she introduced her husband to professional lobbyist Ian Greer, whose business empire collapsed in the aftermath of the "sleaze" scandal.

She also introduced him to her former boss, Sir Michael Gyles, who was censured in Thursday's report for "deliberately concealing" payments received from Mr Greer.

At York University, one of her best friends was the future Tory MP Michael Brown, who was also strongly criticised in Thursday's Downey report findings for failing to register introduction payments from Mr Greer.

The report found that Mr Brown had also failed to declare an interest in Skoal Bandits, a banned American chewing tobacco for which he had lobbied – along with Neil Hamilton.

It was Mrs Hamilton's signature which appeared on the receipt from the Peter Jones department store for a set of expensive garden furniture paid for by Mr Greer.

And it was Mrs Hamilton who booked the room at Mohamed al-Fayed's Paris Ritz which set the sleaze allegations in motion – and where she and her husband charged a total of £2,500 in extras and room service to their room.

When the couple asked if they could return to the hotel, to be told by the irritated office of Mr Fayed that it was full, it was Mrs Hamilton who phoned the hotel and humbly discovered that rooms were in fact available.

During the run-up to the general election, in which Mr Hamilton lost his seat to "anti-corruption" candidate Martin Bell, many observers re-

'We've made mistakes, but show me anyone who hasn't'

marked upon Mrs Hamilton's seemingly genuine sense of outrage that they should be hounded for such apparently small misdemeanours.

"We've made mistakes," she once said of the Ritz allegations. "But show me anyone who hasn't. Tony Blair and John Prescott both enjoyed jolly weekends at Gleneagles. There was nothing wrong in their going but by doing a similar thing, Neil's been made out to be apalling corrupt."

Of their acceptance of Mr Fayed's "hospitality," she said: "The fact that someone owns an hotel should not stop him having private guests."

But then Mrs Hamilton's fierce sense of loyalty – and perhaps her unwell sense of propriety – can be traced all the way back to her first job in the Commons.

Until his death in the early 1970s she worked as secretary to the flamboyant Tory MP for Kidderminster Sir Gerald Nabarro – and still sports an impressive portrait of him in the drawing room at the Hamiltons' home in Neather Alderley.

It was as his secretary in 1972 that she endured her first spell in the media spotlight. As Christine Holman, she stuck loyally by Sir Gerald when he was convicted of a dangerous driving offence in what was at the time a notorious case.

When the conviction was overturned six months later, she was photographed weeping and hugging the MP, chiding a piece of lucky white-headed.

Loyalty – even then – had its rewards: he gave her a gleaming blue Mini, with the registration plate NAB 4.

'I'm prepared to give evidence on oath'

Christian Wolmar
Anthony Bevins

Neil Hamilton said yesterday that he was prepared to give evidence on oath to the Commons committee which will consider whether the former MPs in the cash-for-questions affair should be punished.

Although Mr Hamilton has little faith that the 11-strong Commons Standards and Privileges Committee will reject the findings by the Parliamentary Commissioner, Sir Gordon

Downey, he is preparing a reply to the report in which Sir Gordon said the evidence that Mr Hamilton had accepted undeclared cash payments from the owner of Harrods, Mohamed al-Fayed, "compelling".

Mr Hamilton has 14 days in which to submit a response and then the committee will decide whether to hold oral hearings before ruling on Sir Gordon's report.

Mr Hamilton said yesterday: "I wanted all Sir Gordon's evidence to be on oath but he re-

jected that suggestion. I've always been prepared to say anything that I put to the inquiry on oath and I don't resile from that." If the committee decides to hear from Mr Hamilton, it will probably mean that its final verdict will not be delivered until the autumn.

Mr Hamilton added even further to Tory embarrassment yesterday when he revealed that he could not be expelled from the party – because his membership had automatically lapsed when he lost his Tatum

seat in the May election. The revelation that he had not been a member of his own constituency party association shocked some MPs, and gave extra impetus to William Hague's demand for party reform.

Tony Blair said in his Sedgefield constituency: "MPs, whether they're Conservative or Labour, want to do a good job, and we should make sure that those are the people that are running things rather than the few rotten apples."

The power to put his own side taken by Mr Hague as part of a broader party reform – setting up a national membership register, suspension of MPs and others charged with offences that could bring the party into disrepute, and greater control over the selection of party candidates.

Confusion over Tory membership was evident yesterday at Westminster, where some MPs said they had two membership cards and others said they did not have any.

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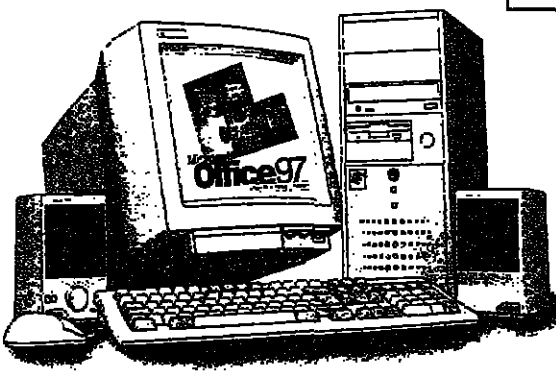
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£5,000 - £9,999	2.25	1.80	1.50
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INDEPENDENT

No final
reward
for wife
at heart
of Tory
sleaze

Levin, Marvin

**Phenomenon
file. Slide 1**

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BRITAIN'S BIGGEST ELECTRICAL STORES

Poetry is rock 'n' roll for the bard who is worth a million

David Lister
Arts News Editor

Poetry is a romantic, private and lyrical art. So when poet of the moment, Murray Lachlan Young, performed live yesterday, he was accompanied by a cellist who played snatches of Elgar's *Cello Concerto*.

But poetry is also the new rock 'n' roll: 26-year-old Lachlan Young has just signed a £1m record deal, and he needs the MTV audience. So every so often the lady on the cello banged her instrument with her hand for a pounding beat, or assaulted the strings to raise a heavy metal sound.

A 15-minute "set" at the Virgin Megastore in central London yesterday, was his first gig since EMI announced that they had signed the unpublished poet who had been touring with The Pet Shop Boys rock band.

He now has a book, compact disc and cassette coming out, a manager who also handles football stars, public relations handlers and hangers on. Thankfully, he sported a rumpled brown corduroy suit and uncombed curls to show that there is still a poet inside the packaging. Lachlan Young's manager, Grant Black, describes his client as "very Byronic". This, one assumes, refers



to his placing his right arm behind his back, fluttering his palm and gazing with wide-eyed intent at the audience. His left hand grabs the microphone or punches the air, neither of which were known traits of Lord Byron.

Lachlan Young is a graduate of the world's first media performance degree course at Salford University. As a performance poet he is soon to tour Britain and America; and perhaps it was with stadiums in mind that he

shouted into the microphone, deafening the 40 or so of us watching — 20 or so if you subtract those with television cameras and radio equipment. Nevertheless, on stage, the tall, skinny, gesticulating poet has a cer-

tain presence, delivering his fairly simple comic rhyming verse in a variety of tones from camp to bawling football supporter to mock romantic. Performance poets down the years, from Pam Ayres to Tony

Harrison, may be wondering why they missed out on £1m deals. Perhaps it is that Lachlan Young has chosen his subject matter well. Nearly every poem seemed to be about the music business.

Meet the superstar: Murray Lachlan Young belting out his rhyming verse to a select audience at the Virgin Megastore in London yesterday for his first performance since signing a £1m deal with EMI. Photograph: Kalpesh Lathigra

One called "Comeback Tour" began:

"A stadium packed with middle-aged males squeezed into tight pants, bald patch, pony tails".

Another was about the Rolling Stones with Mick Jagger impersonation included. Yet another, in anticipatory mood, was called "The Pros and Cons of Superstardom". A typical couplet went:

"Where is my bitter, twisted biographer? Where are the bushes containing photographers?"

At the end of the show, Murray Lachlan Young was rushed away by his minders, perhaps to give him the poetic illusion of hoards of fans.

Lachlan Young had arrived on stage with pop-star laconic hauteur. "I'm going to give you some poetry, I guess," he drawled.

And that's what he did ... I guess.

Smokers win right to sue for damages

Jeremy Laurence
Health Editor

A multi-billion pound compensation battle against British tobacco companies moved a step nearer today as the High Court ruled the litigation should get under way.

A date for the hearing, expected in 18 months, could be set this month but may still fall if the tobacco companies move to have the action struck out. At an administrative hearing on Tuesday, details of which were disclosed yesterday, the companies failed in their attempt to halt the action, which would have left it in limbo.

Forty seven lung-cancer victims have joined together in a group action against Gallaher and Imperial for their alleged failure to limit health risks to smokers. If they win, tens of thousands of others are likely to be eligible for compensation, opening the way to a global settlement.

The case follows last month's historic offer from American tobacco companies of a £225bn fund to settle claims against them in the US.

Marty Day of Leigh Day solicitors, who is representing the 47 British claimants, said: "The US settlement has undoubtedly changed the atmosphere. The massive figure will have an impact on the courts. It is all or nothing for both sides."

The case is being fought on a "no win, no fee" basis after legal aid was refused last year. The Legal Aid board decided that the chances of success were not sufficiently great to justify public expenditure.

A spokeswoman for Ash, the anti-smoking group, said: "The

whole climate of opinion has changed since then. The tobacco industry has realised they have to come to a settlement. In the US they faced the prospect of legal action from so many smokers they couldn't afford the risk of losing."

The British victims will claim that the two companies, Gallaher and Imperial Tobacco Group failed to cut tar levels in their cigarettes and print warnings when it became clear that this would have reduced cancer among smokers.

The group alleges that the manufacturers, which produce four-fifths of Britain's cigarettes, knew — or should have known — by the 1950s that their products were lethal but negligently failed to comply with a legal duty of care to minimise risk. Gallaher makes Benson and Hedges and Silk Cut; Imperial makes Embassy.

Gallaher and Imperial argue that the US settlement has no relevance to the UK. They say they have been printing health warnings on packets since the 1960s — before it became a legal obligation — and that taxes on cigarettes more than pay for the £610m which the Health Education Authority estimates the National Health Service spends annually on treating smoking-related problems.

Mr Day said that if the group action is won, the companies could be at risk of claims for the next 10 to 15 years from people who began smoking in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Assuming that an average claim is worth about £50,000, he said there was a potential legal liability of between £1bn and £2bn a year over the 10 to 15-year period.

Brittan attacks Hague's policy

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

The direction of William Hague's Conservative leadership was strongly attacked yesterday by Sir Leon Brittan, vice-president of the European Commission.

With Tory leaders and strategists assembling in Cambridge for a weekend "brainstorming" session on the way ahead, Sir Leon used a speech to Tory European constituency chairmen and agents, at a Warwick conference, to reinforce the growing concerns of the Tory left.

The former Conservative Cabinet minister criticised Mr Hague's call for a referendum on the Amsterdam Treaty, and his unilateral decision to rule out membership of the single currency at the next election.

Sir Leon said there was no objective reason why the Tories should "remain agitated about

Europe" and he said that if the party wanted to get back into office at the earliest opportunity, it should stop "sulking on the sidelines" and dump its obsession with Europe, "which has plagued the party for so long."

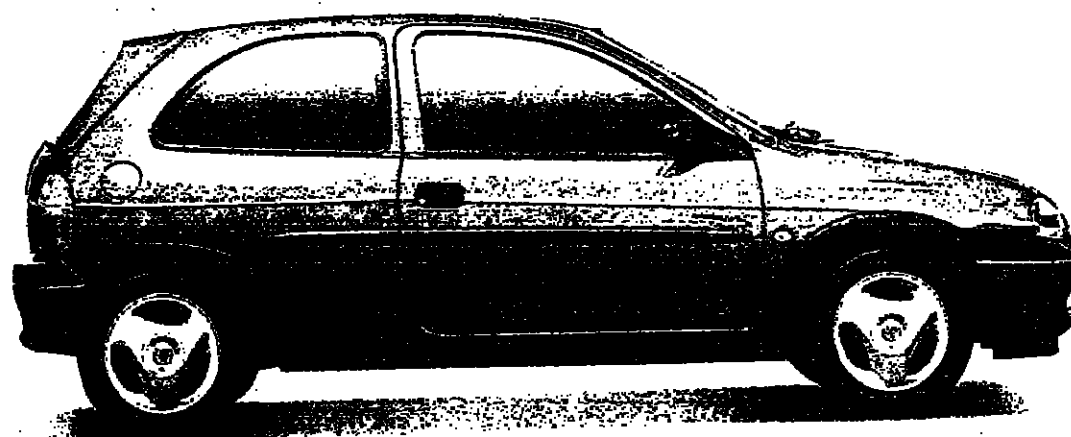
More specifically, however, he said that the new Treaty of Amsterdam was by no means a great leap towards European federalism.

"Claims that the present Amsterdam Treaty is a dramatic assault on British sovereignty do not seem to me to stand up to scrutiny," he said.

"So it is difficult to see the real case for a referendum on the Amsterdam Treaty."

Having denounced Mr Hague's referendum initiative, Sir Leon went on to attack the new leader's decision to rule out membership of a single currency for the lifetime of the next Parliament — possibly 10 years ahead.

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news



Cod war: An Easdale islander surveying one of the quarry pools which has been proposed as a site for Britain's first cod farm

Photograph: Colin McPherson

Cod fish farm has islanders all at sea

Kathy Marks

In 1881, a freak tidal wave engulfed the tiny Scottish island of Easdale and flooded the quarries from which slate was mined. So began the decline of an industry for which Easdale had been famed.

New plans to site Britain's first cod farm in the largest of seven flooded slate quarries has united the island's 60 permanent residents in bitter opposition. They say that the farm will mar Easdale's rugged views, cause pollution, damage marine ecology and drive away tourists.

Earlier this week, the planning committee of Argyll and Bute District Council met to decide whether to grant permission for the project to go ahead.

Senior officials had recommended acceptance of the plans by a Surrey-based company, Subsea Developments (UK) Ltd. But after considering objections from campaigners on Easdale and further afield, the committee voted to conduct a site inspection before making a decision.

Locals dislike the prospect of any change to the slow pace of life on Easdale, a rocky outcrop off the west coast of Scotland. Cars are banned from the island,

which is connected to the mainland by a small ferry service.

Subsea Developments wants to rear cod within four floating fish cages in the quarry. It also plans to lay an underground pipe and build a lock system to enable boats bringing feed to enter from the sea.

The company says that the £25,000 project would bring jobs and prosperity to Easdale. Its planning application, though, reveals that only three jobs would be created.

Residents have organised a petition against the farm, gathering 240 signatures from around Scotland, and have also sent individual letters of protest to the council.

Each year about 10,000 tourists make the five-minute ferry trip to Easdale from the neighbouring Isle of Skye. A chief attraction is a folk museum devoted to the history of the slate industry.

Youn Adams, who runs the museum, fears that it may close if tourist numbers dwindle. She said she was also concerned that drilling work connected with the proposed development might cause underground slate seams to collapse, threatening nearby cottages.

Aids trial woman 'had other lover'

Ian Burrell

A surprise witness told a Cypriot court yesterday that fisherman Pavlos Georgiou was not responsible for passing the Aids virus to Janette Pink, his former British lover.

Antonis Kombos came forward at the 11th hour to say on oath that the British divorcee had a three-year affair with a local Cypriot called Damianos before she met Mr Georgiou.

Mrs Pink, 45, a mother-of-two from Basildon, Essex, has accused Mr Georgiou of wilfully giving her the HIV virus. If found guilty he could be fined and jailed for two years.

Mr Kombos told the court in Larnaca that he had a relationship with Mrs Pink's teenage daughter Katherine, now 20, and they went out as a foursome with Mrs Pink and Damianos, a waiter.

The defence has always insisted that Mrs Pink had lovers before Mr Georgiou who denies a charge of negligently committing an act that could transmit a life-threatening disease.

"In my opinion Pavlos is innocent," Mr Kombos told the court. He said he had warned Mrs Pink in September 1993 that Mr Georgiou, 40, had Aids.

Mrs Pink began a sexual relationship with Mr Georgiou in January 1994 and she claims he failed to tell her he had the HIV virus. The couple met when Mrs Pink went to settle in Cyprus in 1993 after divorcing her husband, a wealthy City accountant. She had previously enjoyed



Janette Pink: 'Relationship with waiter called Damianos'

many holidays on the island.

During the early part of Mr Georgiou's relationship with Mrs Pink, his English-Cypriot wife Martha was dying of Aids in London. Mrs Pink claims that he told her she had leukaemia.

A year ago, Mrs Pink was close to death and weighed only five stone. With the help of a cocktail of drugs she summoned the strength to fly 2,000 miles to Cyprus in May and testify against her former lover.

She was forced to undergo two days of detailed questioning in which she was accused by Tassos Economou, for the defence, of having affairs with both Damianos and a bus driver called Christakis. Neither of the two men has given evidence.

Mrs Pink told the court that Mr Georgiou had been her only lover since the break-up of her marriage. She is unlikely to return to Cyprus for the conclusion of the trial, which is expected later this month.

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'If it gets bad, I hope people like me will be around to scream'

Britain urged to put principles before trade

Steve Crawshaw
Hong Kong

"What's happening now is horrific. The rest of the world isn't excited - they just pay lip service."

Emily Lau is angry, and pessimistic. The 45-year-old leader of the Frontier, one of Hong Kong's main pro-democracy parties, believes that the chances of Hong Kong's not-yet democracy being allowed to develop are less than slim.

Ms Lau, who studied at the London School of Economics and worked as a journalist with the BBC and the Far Eastern Economic Review, is one of the most outspoken politicians in Hong Kong - and one of the most popular. In the 1995 elections, she gained more votes than any other politician in directly elected seats to Hong Kong's legislative council. Like other critics of Peking, she has been excluded from the new-look Legco, which is filled with pro-China appointees.

Yesterday, she was still sitting in the government offices that she has occupied for the past six years. But not for long. The authorities have already removed her name plaque



Hong Kong handover

from the door, following this week's handover of Hong Kong to China. The elected councillors are out; the unelected are moving in. Ms Lau has been ordered to vacate her office within the next few days.

She says that she does not "rule anything out" in the months to come - including the possibility that she and other leading democrats might be arrested, though it is more likely, she thinks, that lesser known figures could be picked off. "I'm very cynical. I wouldn't rule out any bad scenario. I just hope that people like us would be around to scream."

Ms Lau praises the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, for publicly stating last week that the new legislative council is in breach of the joint declaration, which agreed the terms of the handover. Mr Cook (like Madeleine Albright, the US Secre-

tary of State) boycotted the swearing-in ceremony for the new legislature. But Ms Lau is unimpressed by the "disgraceful semi-boycott", which meant that Britain sent along Francis Cornish, Britain's most senior diplomat in the new Hong Kong, despite the Foreign Secretary's no-show. "Either you don't go, or you go. Otherwise you expose yourself to charges of being duplicitous."

Ms Lau insists that she is not being unrealistic, in asking Britain to take a tougher stance. In particular, she is unhappy at the triumphal announcements by Mr Cook and by Tony Blair, both of whom have announced that they will separately visit Peking. "I'm not saying break off diplomatic relations. But at least one should maybe say these visits should not go ahead. Why be so eager to rush into China? Then you've played all your cards."

This message, which Ms Lau has already personally delivered to British government leaders, is more than just a ritual ear-bashing delivered to foreign journalists. In a *Letter to Hong Kong*, to be broadcast in Hong Kong tomorrow, Ms Lau is scathing about what she sees as



Listening for protests: Former legislative council member Emily Lau. She says: 'I wouldn't rule out any bad scenario' Photograph: David Rose

British inertia. "In the case of Britain, a country which has run Hong Kong for 156 years, many people here believe the British government would not lift a finger to help us, should we get into trouble. Like many other governments, London's top priority is getting a slice of the huge China market. We have also not forgotten that trade was the reason why the colony of Hong Kong was

founded in the nineteenth century." The British government's proclaimed new policy is that Hong Kong should be a "bridge, not a barrier". Ms Lau remains wary of the comforting alliteration. "I don't think anybody's saying that Hong Kong should be a barrier to anything. But the fear is that they just don't give a damn."

She criticises the new chief executive, Tung Chee-hwa, for the fact that his promise of new elections by next May - on an electoral system yet to be agreed - emerged only via conversations with foreign visitors. "He's told the foreigners. He hasn't bothered to tell the public."

If Ms Lau offers a ray of hope, it is that Hong Kongers, if pushed up against the wall, might yet be ready to resist. "My perception is that Hong Kong is not that punchy. But people rise up when they are suppressed."

Taiwan stays in tune with HK

Stephen Vines
Hong Kong

Contrary to all expectation, Hong Kong's reversion to Chinese rule has produced closer ties between the former colony and Taiwan, which China regards as a renegade province. This is despite the fact that on Thursday Taiwan's President Lee Teng-hui adamantly turned down the suggestion that Hong Kong's return to Chinese rule could provide a model for Taiwan's return to the mainland.

Not only has Peking allowed the establishment of direct liaison with Hong Kong's new Special Administrative Region (SAR) government but Taiwan

has silently upgraded its representation in the territory by making Cheng An-kuo, its senior official in Hong Kong, the head of a new Hong Kong Affairs Council which will supervise the work of all Taiwan entities in the SAR. The new council will report to the Mainland Affairs Council, instead of the foreign ministry, which indicates that it has a higher status than the three Hong Kong-based bodies which have been working through the foreign ministry.

While President Lee was speaking to journalists in Taipei, Hong Kong's Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa was having a meeting with Koo Chen-fu, the head of Taiwan's semi-official

body which is involved in talks on Chinese reunification. Yesterday Susie Chiang, the director of the Kwang Hwa Information Centre, supposedly Taiwan's main cultural institution in Hong Kong, said she has few concerns about the status of Taiwanese institutions in the SAR. "We will stay and have the same status," she said. "Peking has made it clear that everything will remain the same, until Peking feels it's about time to talk."

Hong Kong has served as the main link between China and Taiwan since the Chinese Revolution in 1949. There had been suggestions that China would use the establishment of the SAR to put pressure on Taiwan

to create more direct links with the mainland, such as direct shipping and air route. This could easily be done by cranking down on the transit links currently operating in Hong Kong. Mrs Chiang said: "I don't think direct links can succeed in the near future because Taiwan is holding back. Hong Kong still has a role as a stepping stone."

Mr Tung has appointed Paul Yip, his special adviser, as the link man with Taiwan. Mr Yip, who has a background in Hong Kong's leftist organisations, is widely viewed as Mr Tung's main political adviser. He met Taiwan's Mr Koo alongside Mr Tung and has held discreet meetings with him in recent weeks.

China has been sending out confusing signals about these contacts between Hong Kong and Taiwan. On Thursday, the foreign ministry spokesman Tang Guoqiang said that all official contacts had to be reported to Peking for approval but yesterday the ministry said that contacts between Hong Kong and Taiwan fell into a special category, apart from foreign affairs, and therefore did not necessarily require approval from central government. China has repeatedly stressed its desire for reunification with Taiwan in the past few days but had not been expected to foster this objective through the new Hong Kong administration.

Khmer Rouge accuse over coup plan

Cambodia's Khmer Rouge guerrillas yesterday accused the country's second Prime Minister of plotting a coup against his partner in Cambodia's fractured coalition, as negotiations with the rebel group appeared to have stalled.

Cambodia's First Prime Minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who has been holding talks with the guerrillas, travelled to Bangkok yesterday to meet a senior Cambodian official, a key negotiator with the rebels, at Phnom Penh's embassy in Bangkok, a Thai security source said.

Prince Ranariddh's top military adviser, another key negotiator in the Khmer Rouge talks, was sent to the guerrillas' north-west base of Angkor Veng on Thursday but he later reported no progress in securing the hand-over of Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot, a key condition in the peace talks.

Relations between Prince Ranariddh and the Second Prime Minister, Hun Sen, which have been strained for more than a year over a power-sharing dispute, have been inflamed by a sharp difference over how to handle the dwindling Khmer Rouge rebel movement.

While Prince Ranariddh has supported peace talks, Hun Sen considers negotiations with the rebels illegal. Political analysts said their dispute over the Khmer Rouge reflected attempts by both men to bolster their political positions ahead of elections next May. The coalition government was formed after Cambodia's United Nations-run elections in 1993.

The rebels' clandestine radio, said yesterday that Hun Sen was building up troops and fire power in the capital and at his Tuol Krasang compound near Phnom Penh in preparation for a strike against Prince Ranariddh. However, Khmer Rouge failed to broadcast a statement by Prince Ranariddh, who said negotiations cannot move forward until the rebels declare they have broken with Pol Pot and recognise the constitution.

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international

Kidnap king falls out with Lebanese hosts

Robert Fisk
Baalbek, Lebanon

Nobody talked about The Split. Indeed, the Hizbollah in Beirut had carefully refrained from any comment on Sheikh Sobhi Tofaili's "Revolution of the Hungry" in Baalbek. Nothing was said about Tofaili's decision to dress the Baalbek town hall - the entire Ottoman-built serial - in a black funeral shroud, the material carefully labelled with the words "The Coffin of Lebanese Authority."

Not a word was passed about the young men dancing through the crowd and waving flat Arabic bread on wooden poles. Not a mutter about Sheikh Tofaili's call for civil disobedience, a tax strike by the poor of the Bekaa Valley against the "bloodsucking" Lebanese government.

For it would not do to have Sayed Hassan Nasrallah, the secretary general of the Hizbollah, criticising Sheikh Sobhi Tofaili, the former secretary general of the Hizbollah and one of the founders of the "Party of God". But The Split was what the people of Baalbek were talking about yesterday, along with some very valuable support for Sheikh Tofaili's campaign against poverty. One local businessman, attired in a white galbaya robe against the sun which burned down upon the Roman temples behind him, put it quite bluntly: "Tofaili wants to make his name again. It's a long time since he was a really important guy."

Long indeed: but not forgotten. For Sheikh Sobhi, bespectacled, turbaned and sporting some unexpected grey hairs these days, represents the unreformed version of the Hizbollah - before the pro-Iranian party moved into democratic politics, became media-friendly and adopted the habits of Tehran's moderates. Back in the bad old



In the cold: Sheikh Sobhi Tofaili, the former head of Hizbollah, speaking during the Baalbek rally yesterday. Photograph: AP

days - or the good old days as Sheikh Sobhi would remember them - things were simpler. The Hizbollah was against America, France, Israel, the West, all manner of smaller Satans and, especially, Westerners rash enough to go on living in Lebanon. Terry Anderson, the longest-held American hostage, spent a small portion of his almost seven years' captivity locked up in Sheikh Sobhi's Beirut office.

If only Terry could have been with us in Baalbek yesterday. For there was the grand old man of Kidnapping Inc, playing the role of Mahatma Gandhi, promising a day of civil disobedience, appealing for God's curses to be heaped

upon the Lebanese government, insisting his people's "march of hunger" would be unstoppable, that it would breach even "the gates of Beirut." Given the fact that scarcely 4,000 demonstrators turned up to support Sheikh Sobhi this seemed over-ambitious. True, the people of the northern Bekaa have been ignored by the money-making administration in Beirut: in an effort to preempt the good Sheikh, the government last week promised a £60m development plan for the region - and true, the local hospitals and infrastructure have been allowed to rot since the civil war ended in 1990. But to hear Sheikh Sobhi demanding financial assistance for the land-

owners who have been forced to give up hashish-farming was a bit much. Already they are growing potatoes, and heavily subsidised ones to boot.

But the yellow Hizbollah banners - the shape of a Kalashnikov rifle helping to spell the word Allah (God) - fluttered above the crowd in front of the black-shrouded Baalbek town hall, along with two tatty and slightly faded Iranian flags. And that, in a sense, said it all. For Sheikh Sobhi Tofaili was the ally of Hojatoleslam Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, the Iranian founding father of the Hizbollah, former Iranian ambassador to Damascus, former interior minister in Tehran. But Tofaili is now as much in the cold as Mohtashemi is in Iran: the leadership of President Rafsanjani - and president-elect Khatami - has transformed the Hizbollah in Lebanon, its younger leadership concentrating on politics and resistance to Israeli occupation in southern Lebanon. Relevant though Sheikh Sobhi's words may have been to the poor of Baalbek, he remains a man of the past.

But if this is a split, it is not one in which the Hizbollah's enemies can take much comfort. The one thing which both Tofaili and Nasrallah in Beirut have in common is their determination to destroy Israel's occupation army in southern Lebanon, and the Hizbollah is increasing its assaults on the occupiers with ever more effective roadside bombs, rocket and mortar attacks. Why, yesterday - along with demands for free hospitals, free education and dam construction - Sheikh Sobhi Tofaili was asking for Hizbollah guerrillas, along with their wounded, to be treated as if they were members of the Lebanese army. He wanted pensions for them. The Hizbollah as Dad's Army. It was quite a thought.



Cutting comment: Demonstrators at the Hizbollah 'hunger revolt'. Photograph: AP

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Mugabe stands aside as Banana is hounded with gay rape charge

Mary Braid
Johannesburg

Zimbabwe's former president Canaan Banana is to be charged with sodomy, attempted sodomy and indecent assault in the next few days, according to the country's attorney general Patrick Chinamasa.

In a country where homosexuality is illegal and President Robert Mugabe regularly indulges in gay-bashing, the decision to take Mr Banana, 60, a long-time political ally of Mr Mugabe, to court, has caused a scandal.

Mr Mugabe has attacked homosexuals as "lower than pigs and dogs" and says homosexuality is a perversion imported from the West.

Rape allegations were first made against Mr Banana in February during a trial at Harare High Court. His former aide de camp, Jetha Dube, 36, claimed he had shot a policeman because he was taunted for being Mr Banana's "wife". Mr Dube told the court Mr Banana had forced him to have sex for three years. Since Mr Dube's trial, other men, including a cook, a gardener, a security man and six former aides, have claimed Mr Banana sodomised or assaulted them.

Mr Banana, a figurehead president to the then Prime Minister Mugabe after independence, claims the accusations are part of a campaign to discredit him. The Methodist clergyman, who now lectures in theology and is married with four children, insists he is not homosexual.

But Mr Chinamasa has said he is satisfied Mr Banana "has



Allies no more: Former president Canaan Banana (left) and Robert Mugabe who refuses to support his predecessor



a case to answer". More than 30 witnesses are expected to appear soon in a high court case which will be heard in open court.

Mr Dube, who was sentenced to 10 years for the 1995 murder of the policeman, claimed Mr Banana's attentions had left him depressed and alcoholic. He claims that he had to comply with his boss's wishes or lose his job.

The judge who tried Mr Dube for murder ruled he had suffered diminished responsibility at the time of the killing. The judge then ordered that the charges against Mr Banana be investigated by police.

In Harare, where rumours of Mr Banana's homosexuality have circulated since the 1980s, the decision to prosecute has puzzled many. Unusually, the autocratic President Mugabe has made no attempt to sever his ally, or hush the allegations up. Despite the embarrassment to

the government it seems happy to let Mr Banana sink. Commentators are also puzzled by Mr Banana's claims that he is the victim of a political conspiracy.

"He was only ever a figurehead and has really no position of power," said one. In court, Mr Dube claimed senior officials in the ruling Zanu (PF) party and the security services knew about Mr Banana's abuse of power and colluded in intimidating him to comply with the former president's sexual demands.

Mr Dube claimed in court that he resisted Mr Banana for the first six months but that the president eventually spiked his drink. He said that the last thing he could remember was Mr Banana trying to remove his trousers. He woke next morning to be confronted by the smiling president who said: "We helped ourselves."

significant shorts

Palestinians wounded as Hebron erupts

Israeli troops firing rubber bullets wounded 14 Palestinians in the West Bank after coming under a hail of bricks, bombs and bottles. A boy was taken to hospital after a rubber-coated pellet fired by troops penetrated his skull; he was in a serious condition. The clashes erupted after demonstrators jeered activists from President Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction who tried to intervene to dampen renewed violence. In PLO-ruled Gaza, a 14-year-old mute, Ibrahim Abu Rumeih, in a coma since being shot near a Jewish settlement last month, died. Palestinians said an Israeli soldier shot him. Reuters - Hebron

Albanians haggle over vote

Albania's election ground towards its second and final round as the victorious Socialists and outgoing Democrats argued over responsibility for violence at a monarchist rally in which one person died. International troops moved in to guard the vote-count headquarters a day after shooting erupted when the pretender to the throne, Leka I, strode past wearing fatigues and armed with two pistols. A young man was killed. Reuters - Tirana

Bosnian Serbs defy president

The Bosnian Serb parliament, dominated by nationalists loyal to indicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic, began a crisis session in defiance of an order by President Biljana Plavsic disbanding it. However, before the session began the constitutional court had ruled that the government could ignore her decision. Reuters - Pale, Bosnia

Western Samoa no more

Western Samoa's parliament voted to simplify the country's name to Samoa. The four largest western islands, originally German and later New Zealand territory, obtained independence in 1962. AP - Suva, Fiji

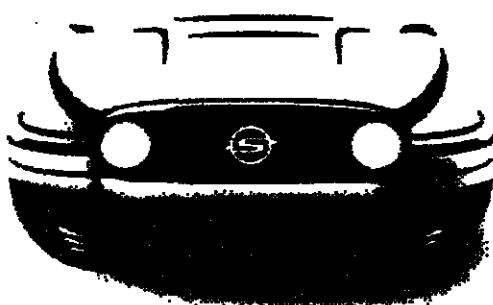
Haiti joins trade grouping

The 14-member Caribbean Community admitted Haiti days after agreeing to create a Caricom single market by 1999. Haiti's admission of more than doubles Caricom's total population. Reuters - Montego Bay, Jamaica

Hanging out in Ontario

Women in Ontario are taking to the streets to test their new freedom to bare breasts in public. The arrival of warm weather has been marked this year by topless sunbathers, in-line skaters and the opening of Canada's first topless retail outlet. In December it became legal for women in Ontario to go topless in public after courts overturned the conviction of a woman charged with indecency after she took to the streets topless in 1991. The court ruled that the law was discriminatory since men could shed their shirts in public. Reuters - Toronto

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Drug links bedevil Mexican democracy

By Davison
Mexico City

His described by the US Drug Enforcement Administration as one of Mexico's top 20 drug lords but Vicente Fox is hardly the run. In fact, he is running for mayor of a north Mexican border town, a stone's throw from Arizona, in tomorrow's elections and no one is being against him.

Mr Fox, 41, candidate of the nationally ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in Agua Prieta, even keeps his plane on the US side of the border and crosses by car at night with a special pass. His campaign reflects problems facing US agents uncovering what they say are strong links between Mexico's drug cartels and local, state and possibly national government officials.

DEA agents say that, as busts shut or slowed operations in Colombia and the Caribbean, Mexican cartels filled the gaps, usually buying protection from police, the military and local of-

Being named as a top drug lord does no harm to political chances

ficials. They say drug barons made huge inroads into the Mexican political system under the previous president, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, now disgraced and living in Ireland. His brother Raul is in jail on suspicion of drug-money laundering and ordering the murder of a political opponent.

DEA reports allege Mr Fox, who says he made his money selling satellite dishes, is part of a cocaine cartel based in the northern state of Sonora. Francisco of Colombian cocaine land at airstrips on his ranches before being smuggled by land into Arizona, they say. Mr Fox insists he is a simple cattle farmer. There are, he notes, no wanted posters, only campaign posters around Agua Prieta. The DEA says his wealth came from laundered drug money.

Polls suggest Mr Fox will

become mayor with more than half the vote. The elections will also choose a 500-member parliament, 32 senators, a Mexico City mayor, six state governors and assorted local officials.

Mr Fox is a wanted man neither in the US nor Mexico. He can be seen driving through Douglas, Arizona, across the border from Agua Prieta, where some of his brothers and sisters live and where his Cessna is parked in a hangar.

The depth of Mexico's narco-political connections became clear this year when Jesus Gutierrez Rebollo, picked by the current president, Ernesto Zedillo, to head the nation's anti-drugs agency, was held on charges of taking pay-offs from the drug baron Amado Carrillo. General Gutierrez was in charge of the Guadalajara area in 1993 when the city's cardinal, Juan Jesus Posadas, was shot at

the city airport. Local authorities, from the PRI, attempted to bill the killing as accidental - that the cardinal was caught in crossfire between two drug gangs - but most Mexicans believe that the killing reflected links and disputes among government officials, the powerful church and drug lords.

The killing in Tijuana the following year of Carlos Salinas's handpicked successor as PRI candidate for the presidency, Luis Donaldo Colosio, is also believed to have stemmed from a narco-political conspiracy. A few weeks before his death Colosio had appeared to turn against Mr Salinas in a campaign speech.

Both Raul and Carlos Salinas deny drug connections. Raul earned only a civil servant's salary as an official in his brother's 1988-94 government, but \$100m was traced to him in Swiss and other foreign bank accounts.

He says it was lent to him by friends who wanted him to invest for them.

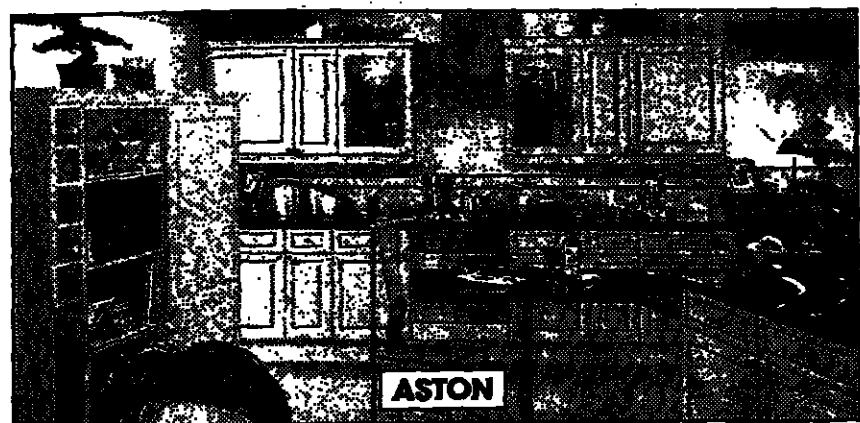
Mandela on the ball at birthday party



South Africa's President Nelson Mandela 'shooting the hoop' with Harlem Globetrotters at a party in Cape Town in honour of his 79th birthday, on 18 July. Some 1,000 children with life-threatening diseases attended. Photograph: AFP

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Monsieur Guignol makes a rainy day grand

PARIS DAYS

In Paris, as in Britain, as in most of northern Europe, it has been one of the wettest early summers of the century. Stubborn, unyielding rain is unpleasant in any city, but there is something especially maddening about rain in Paris.

Despite the excellence of its public transport, and the pedestrian tendencies of its traffic, the French capital is a walking city. If you cannot stroll comfortably from place to place, much of the pleasure of living in Paris is spoiled. When it rains, unless your destination is close to a Metro station, or you brave the demolition derby in the streets, you have to walk. In Paris, as in most other cities, the buses and taxis dissolve in water.

In other places I have lived (Boston, Brussels, London), rain was tediously predictable. In Paris, the rain is malevolent. It rushes out of pipes placed at head-height by the city's archaic plumbing system. It gathers in great globules on the beautiful, wrought iron balconies and falls with astonishing accuracy down the back of your neck. If you have an umbrella, the aggravated rain-drops canon off the pavement and soak your trousers, or, if you are a woman, so I am told, bounce impossible distances up your thighs.

'Rain cannons off pavements to soak your trousers'

Parisian street gutters tend to resemble mountain streams in the driest weather (part of the municipal cleansing system). In heavy rain, the gutters become raging Amazons. I have, incidentally, been asked by a reader to explain one of the mysteries of Parisian street life. What on earth is the purpose of those rolled up pieces of sack, or blanket, or carpet, tied in string, which litter the gutters of Paris? Are they the bed-rolls of foreign students, who fall long ago into the sewers? Are they provided, thoughtfully but untidily, by the Town Hall to allow prams to ascend the high curbs?

I believe I know the unpoetic answer to this existential mystery, raised by Anne Hegarty of Baldock, Hertfordshire. Long ago, I worked a night shift in Paris and would walk home at dawn. I would see the African foot-soldiers in the city's great army of street-cleaners manipulating the unappealing bundles with their sweeping brushes; they are designed to block and direct the flow of water which cleans the gutters of dog-poo and other detritus. Who said the French are not a resourceful people?

Back to the rain. It was on the

wettest day of the week, that I had to look after the children. Initially it was just Charlie, who is seven. Clare, aged 3, had been packed off to her best school-friend, Charlotte. After a couple of hours the girls decided to re-stage the Holyfield-Tyson fight and I was summoned to remove Clare before they reached the ear-severing stage.

What can you do with children in Paris in the rain? There are dozens of places the children have come to enjoy: the marvellous Jardin d'Acclimatation, which is a permanent fair-ground set in beautiful gardens the donkeys in the Jardins du Ranelagh; the toyshops in the Jardin du Luxembourg (actually they don't like that one, but I do).

The problem is that, apart from being costly, all these activities are impossible in the rain. Only one option was left: the puppets. There are 15 puppet shows listed in the Paris entertainment guide. My favourites are the Marionnettes du Ranelagh in the 16th arrondissement. But they have a suspect, corrugated iron roof. The last time we went there in the rain, it was like having a cold shower with your clothes on. The Marionnettes in the Champs Elysees are in the open-air and, anyway, disappointing.

It was agreed that we would try the marionettes in the Luxembourg gardens, which have their own miniature opera house. Puppet shows are a revelation of national character: an admission of the nation's true self, or an assertion of what the nation secretly believes itself to be. In Britain, we have to put up with the tedious Mr Punch: bawdy, violent and self-obsessed.

In Paris, the puppet shows are much funnier and more varied, with wonderfully elaborate costumes and scenery. They almost all chronicle the adventures of Monsieur Guignol, a French everyman: cheerful, playful, feckless, resourceful, loyal, polite but finally not too respectful of authority. He is usually dressed as an 18th-century butler, with a strange waxy three-cornered hat and a long pig-tail. It is Monsieur Guignol's task to resolve, with a mixture of silly puns and slap-stick, the bizarre complications which arise in a classic children's story (for instance Little Red Riding Hood with a cuddly wolf who only eats pasta). The one we saw this week was a cock-eyed mixture of Sleeping Beauty and Cinderella.

We emerged after 45 happy minutes into ... bright sunshine.

John Lichfield

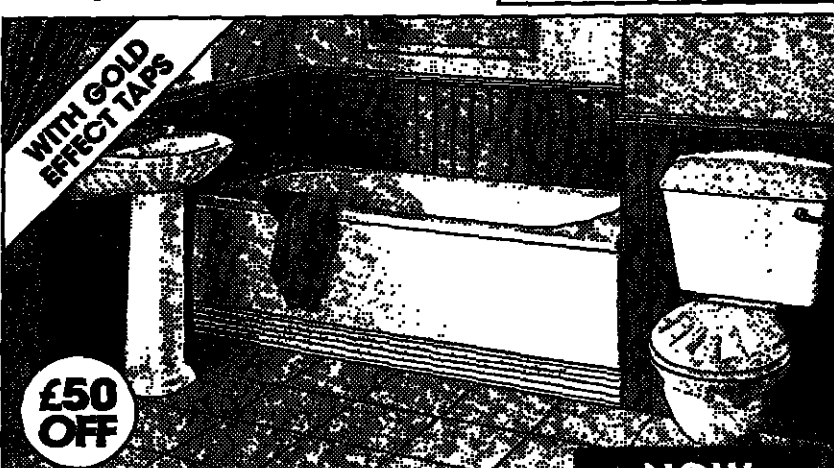
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At the point of the Second World War, Forbes was president of the London Symphony Orchestra, but from 1940 onwards he joined the famous V.M. Orchestra which was a group of small groups of musicians in their own right. Forbes joined the V.M. Orchestra which included composers and conductors including the exception of Gertrude Lawrence. He also made more recordings than any other musician in the V.M. Orchestra.

After the war, Forbes continued to conduct the orchestra, but in 1944 he became a member of the Royal Academy of Music. In 1944, he became a member of the Royal Academy of Music. In 1944, he became a member of the Royal Academy of Music.

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IMAGE OF THE WEEK English opium eater: a dormouse takes a speculative sniff at a poppy head in Mortlake Cemetery, south-west London. Poppy love - Anna Pavord on the appeal of the emblematic flower on page 17. Photograph by John Voos using a Nikon F4 with a 300mm lens at 1,000th second at f4, on Kodak Multispeed film, rated at 640 ASA. To order a print of this picture - at a cost of £15 - phone 0171-293 2534



the long weekend

THE INDEPENDENT • SATURDAY 5 JULY 1997

WORDS OF THE WEEK

Why the weather clouds an artist's vision

As we huddle under anoraks from the rain and complain about the drought, a new book tells you everything you need to know about British weather.

More than 5,800 paintings dated between 1400 and 1967 by major artists, whose works were in important art galleries, were once analysed to see what influence climate might have had on art.

In Britain, low clouds (stratus, stratocumulus and nimbostratus) are common, the stratus giving dull, cheerless days and the nimbostratus rain. Convective or cumulus clouds are common in summer and in polar maritime air, as the artists have indicated. It is probable that the number of paintings with cumulus clouds exaggerates the total, because these clouds would often be associated with good weather for artistic work. In the Low Countries, the cloud base is often higher, because the air tends to be drier than in Britain, and this is reflected by the artist. Artists of the German school were attracted by medium and high clouds, including wave clouds over mountains. The infrequency of low cloud in Italy is noticeable.

There was not a single British painting with a completely clear sky, and overcast skies were more frequent with British artists than with other schools.

As the table shows, paintings with clear sky in the background are in a minority in all of the schools. It is not surprising that no artist from the British school has painted a clear sky, because it has to be admitted that totally cloudless skies are not common in the British Isles.

One hears the older generation say: "Winters were colder and summers more summery when I was young." The records do indeed show that there was a run of severe winters in the Forties and

Relative frequencies of cloud families by schools of artists

Artists	High	Middle	Low	Convective
British	5	23	40	32
Flemish & Dutch	5	32	27	32
French	5	36	27	28
German	11	33	27	29
Italian	9	43	14	34
Spanish	6	38	28	28

Fifties, culminating in the notorious freeze-up of 1962-63.

Four outstandingly warm, sunny summers also occurred in the space of 13 years, in 1947, 1949, 1955 and 1959. During the Seventies, 1975 and 1976 were outstanding; in the Eighties, 1983 and 1989. The Nineties began with record-breaking heat in August 1990, 1993, 1994 and 1995.

In the Thirties there were two good summers, in 1933 and 1934, but no severe winter, whereas the Twenties had the famous long, hot, dry summer of 1921 and a severe cold spell in 1929, which was the longest since 1895.

It is certainly true that there was no snowfall of any consequence in many parts of the south from Christmas 1970 up to 1977, but records of snowiness began only in about 1912 - not long enough ago for us to judge whether the climate is changing, or whether such a snow-free spell has happened before.

Most people tend to remember unusual and sensational events, and so it is with

weather. Snow and heat are both sufficiently rare to make an impression. The author has heard it said that every day was fine and hot in June, July and August in 1976. A study of records shows that a few days were remarkably cool and cloudy, and even wet. The bad days were forgotten unless a special event was spoiled. Another frequently expressed view goes something like this, and shows some of the problems of relying on people rather than instruments: "The winters always seemed snowier when I was a child. I remember it coming up to my knees." But your knees were nearer the ground when you were a child. It may have been snowier for someone growing up in the Forties, Fifties and early Sixties, but some winters had very little snow.

"We used to swim in the sea every day during the summer holidays, but recently the sea has been much too cold" - implies that the summers of the past in the good old days must have been better. One cool August morning, with the air temperature only 14C, a

steady north-easter blowing and only fitful sunshine, a curious sight met the author's eyes on a north Devon beach, deserted save for two people in deck chairs, huddled in warm clothing. They felt an explanation was needed.

Their two children were happily surfing in the sea, while their parents were unhappily "freezing" on land. Would that summer day go down as a poor one weatherwise for those two children?

What is the record for successive days without rain in Britain? In the famous spring drought of 1893, some places in south-east England had no rain for 50 or more consecutive days. Hailsham, near Eastbourne, had no rain for 61 days, from 17 March to 16 May; but the longest drought of all was in London, in Mile End, and lasted 73 days, from 4 March to 15 May.

While watching the 12.55 BBC1 weather forecast on Sunday, 11 October 1987, I was impressed by the very large number of close isobars shown on the fore-

cast chart for Thursday evening. I remarked to my wife that a phenomenal gale could be expected on Thursday night, if they were right.

In the early hours many people were awakened by the noise of the howling wind, and by bright flashes. These flashes were not lightning, but were caused by short circuits. Power lines were thrashing against each other or were brought down by trees. The noise from my garden was frightening. Dawn revealed chaos in the south-east of England, roughly east of a line from Bournemouth to Cromer. The maximum recorded gust was 115mph, at Shoreham, Sussex.

The publicity given to the so-called "hurricane" may have had something to do with the fact that it happened on the doorstep of the media people in London, and, of course, where more people can be affected. Ten million people being inconvenienced by a storm is much more newsworthy than a few thousand in a thinly populated part of the country. There is some evidence that tower blocks may contribute to storm damage by increasing turbulence.

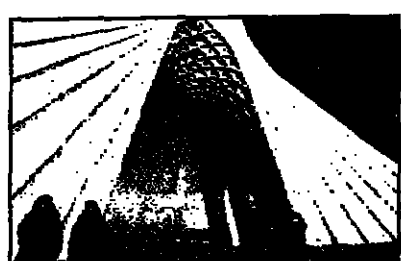
Another factor in the perceived severity of the storm is our dependence on electricity. A storm such as this one would not have caused so much dislocation 50 years ago. Few country dwellers would have had power to be interrupted, or freezers to be emptied. The fallen branches would also have been looked upon as a bonus by more people as a source of free fuel.

'The Weather of Britain', by Robin Stirling, is published on 21 July by Giles de la Mare, price £19.99.

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Playing the numbers racket

Tennis? It's mostly a game of luck, says William Hartston in this statistical guide to Wimbledon watching

Just suppose, for a moment, that we wanted to find out which of two tennis players was better at the game. What we'd do, if we had any sense, would be to give each of them 100 serves – 50 from each side of the court – and see who won more points. Instead of that, we divide the points into games and the games into sets in a manner that could hardly be better calculated to confuse the issue. Of course just playing to see who is first to win 51 points would be rather boring, but the rules of tennis are not designed solely to provide the thrill of a game decided every few minutes: their real purpose is to ensure that the better player sometimes loses. We'll come back to that later. First, let's work out the odds.

Suppose (as is more or less the case) that the server wins twice as many points as he loses. Then if the returner manages to struggle to deuce, his chance of breaking serve by winning the next two points is only one in nine, with an additional four in nine chance of reaching another deuce. It is not difficult to work out from this that the chance of a service break is only one in five. When the crowd become excited, just because their hero has reached deuce and has, in the breathless words of the commentator, "a real chance here to break serve", they ought to realise it's only 20 per cent and calm down a little. Even at love-30, the odds are slightly in favour of the server to win the game.

If you go back to the beginning of the game, it turns out that the server has an 86 per cent chance of winning the game, with only a 14 per cent chance of a break. This means that we should expect serve to be broken about once every seven games. Which means that each player may expect to have his serve broken less often than once a set. And that is why most sets end 6-3 or 6-4.

As you watch the Wimbledon finals this weekend, you should realise that the thrills come not from the brilliance of a delicately played drop volley, or an elegant lob landing right on the

baseline. The true excitement lies in the interaction of random fluctuations of different variables. Even those "Oh I say" great shots are no more than statistical quirks. The lob that lands half an inch outside the baseline is no worse a shot than the line-clipping winner. It just happened to turn out well. If one player's fine play gives him a slightly greater chance of holding serve than his opponent – say seven chances in eight compared with five out of six, we are still essentially toss-

ing two biased coins, one a little more crooked than the other, and waiting for the less likely sides to come up.

You can try an experiment, if you like, with a dice and three coins. One player – called, for example, Stich – rolls the dice and wins the game unless he rolls a one; the other replies by tossing the coins, and holds his serve unless three tails come up. Just try it and see how often the better player manages to win in straight sets.

In fact, looking at the results from

three Grand Slam tournaments (France, the United States and Wimbledon) in 1996, there were 96 straight set victories out of 185 men's singles matches – so in about half the matches the worse player managed to win at least one set.

Earlier this year, the science journal *Nature* reported an intriguing piece of research that compared different professional sports according to the number of games played in one season of their major league. The con-

clusion was that sports involving a competitive structure that guarantees enough surprises to keep the audience excited. If the result of every game is almost random (as in baseball), you need hundreds of games in a season to provide a good chance that the best team will emerge on top; if the better team wins almost all the time (as in rugby football), a much shorter season is enough to determine a fair overall winner. For the spectators, it is just as unsatisfactory for the better team to win all the time as for every result to be determined by pure chance.

In general, it is the high-scoring sports (such as basketball) that have the greatest reliability, while low-scoring ones (such as football), produce the most upsets. And that is one of the reasons why so many more people watch football than basketball.

The genius of tennis is that the rules have evolved to turn a high-scoring game, in terms of the number of points played in a match, into a low-scoring game in terms of the sets which decide the issue. Occasionally a player wins a match despite losing more points and games.

Finally, for future use, here is a guide to other major sports:

Football: Two sides try to kick a ball into each other's nets. To do so, they must create "scoring opportunities" each of which has a slim chance of being converted into a goal. One good side may score about once every 45 minutes; another poor side may score once every 80 minutes. In a 90-minute random sample, the better side will probably score one, two or three goals; the worse side will score 0, one or two. Sometimes the worse side will win 2-1.

Cricket: Batsmen sometimes make mistakes. When they do their innings is over. A good batsman may make a fatal error once every 100 deliveries. His score will fluctuate wildly between 0 and 100 or more. The team's score is the sum of 11 numbers picked at random from various distributions in this range. Even 11 good batsmen may occasionally produce a total adding to less than 100. The opposing bowlers then congratulate themselves.

Golf: People try to hit a ball into a small hole. After taking two or three shots to get it near the hole. Once it is near enough to the hole, it takes sometimes one and sometimes two shots to hit it. A round of golf is thus roughly equivalent to tossing a coin 18 times and counting one for every head and two for every tail. Tiger Woods's coin is biased towards heads, but not enough for him to win all the time.

Flying saucer spotting

There has been a conspiracy over the Roswell incident, says William Hartston, but not in the way most people seem to think

Forty years ago yesterday, something happened in the town of Roswell, New Mexico. Since that date – America's Independence Day in 1947 – the United States government and security services have conspired to cover up the truth. And the truth is that there are no such things as flying saucers, no aliens have ever landed in Roswell, their bodies have not been preserved in secret government locations, their technology has not been borrowed for US military purposes and no Americans have been abducted by visitors from other planets.

All the evidence suggests that this has been perhaps the most brilliantly effective post-war disinformation campaign by the American security services. By persistently denying the existence of flying saucers, and even denying the existence of evidence to show that they are interested in them, the CIA has fuelled the imagination of UFOlogists and conspiracy theorists to the extent that most Americans now believe that little grey men with smooth skins and no eyebrows have been day-tripping to California.

There's an enormous amount of evidence from all over the world to show that governments have indeed covered up the truth," said Stanton Friedman, the world's leading authority on the strange happenings at Roswell. "The United States certainly has. We have statements about hundreds of documents about UFOs that are being withheld." And when, under the Freedom of Information Act, he finally obtained some 900 pages of material whose very existence had been denied, many of the pages had vast areas blacked out. What more conclusive evidence of a cover-up could there be?

He is right. There has been a cover-up. But not in the direction he and millions of other UFOlogists and fellow space-travellers think. Let's go back to that crash in 1947. Just suppose it was part of some top secret US military research. There must have been, and must still be, many strange things going on in the skies that the US government does not want anyone to know about. When something went wrong, it was a gift from the skies when good American citizens started jumping up and down saying they had seen a flying saucer. Belief in flying saucers was the perfect foil to deflect attention from defence secrets. Far better that investigative efforts should be channelled into looking for alien bodies than that they should probe the inner mysteries of the Defence Department.

So the US Air Force, the CIA and the FBI went into overdrive, doing what they do best: they denied it. Which, of course, made more people believe it. So they concocted a story about weather balloons, which made even more people believe they must be lying. After 50 years of denial, they are clearly on a roll. According to one recent survey, the number of Americans who have been abducted by aliens could be as high as 2 million. (That figure comes from asking people about bumps and noises experienced at night. Apparently if you wake up in a different position from the one you fell asleep in, or if your pyjamas are crumpled, it could be because you were abducted by aliens and returned clumsily to your bed. They're brilliant at probing our minds and levitating us through walls, but putting our jim-jams back on straight is beyond them.)

Last week, the official US government explanation of the happenings at Roswell confirmed the existence of mannequins dropped as crash dummies in the area. The mannequins were not dropped until the 1950s. Which proves – in the minds of true believers at least – that whatever dropped in 1947 must have been a grey chap with no eyebrows.

Soon, I confidently expect, another document will be dragged reluctantly from CIA top secret files under the orders of a judge under the Freedom of Information Act. It will appear something like this:

Twinkle xxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxx wonder xxxxx you are
xxxx above the world xxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx in the sky.

And once again the Ufo-lovers will find their case proven beyond doubt.

Last week a television programme in this country debated the question of whether aliens had landed on earth. In a phone-in vote at the end of the programme, a startling 92 per cent of respondents said they believed that aliens were already here. Three cheers for the Security Services of the USA.

The games page is edited by William Hartston

Games people play

Pandora Melly talks to Lord Lichfield about thick photographers, thin rugby players, parachutes, camels and cameras

Patrick, 5th Earl of Lichfield, 58, photographer and arboriculturist

My first big jump start in photography was given to me by Jocelyn Stevens when he was the editor of *Queen* magazine. He also took advantage at every possible chance, nearly every scrape I got into, Jocelyn had a hand in it. And there were many. One sticks in my mind particularly.

He said to me one day: "Go out and

photograph the 13 most eligible bachelors in England, and we'll publish it on Valentine's Day." I was so thick, I didn't realise that one more was needed to make up the 14. And he added a photograph of me – a really silly picture of the photographer laden down with cameras like a camel, which I'd sent him as a joke. The caption underneath read: "England's 14th most eligible bachelor will take you out to dinner if you answer these questions correctly..." But I don't

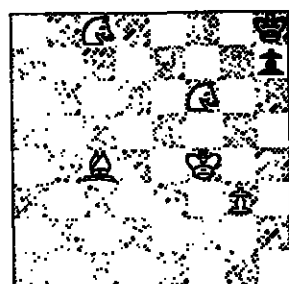
know if that really counts as a game.

The game that I find most interesting in the sense of why the players are so different is rugger. Most people don't realise that whatever shape you are, there is a position on the rugby field for you. Very tall, or very small people have their place among the 15 men, and if you look at the line-up when you go and shake hands on the pitch, there is an amazing array of the large, the fat, the thin and the small.

Mind you, I'm now talking about spectator sports. I used to box and play cricket, and as a schoolboy, I was very keen on team games. But I think that as one gets older, one plays less and less. Time is the enemy; my regret is that I'll probably have to give up parachuting. I suppose I could go on, but it's not really an old man's game.

'Queen' magazine is no more. Sir Jocelyn Stevens is the Chairman of English Heritage.

Chess William Hartston



The French composer Auguste D'Orville was one of the pioneers of 19th century problems. Before he came along, most composed problems were cumbersome positions full of superfluous pieces included solely to give a pretence of game-like reality. D'Orville dispensed with his positions with the aim of producing beautiful finishes in a surprising manner.

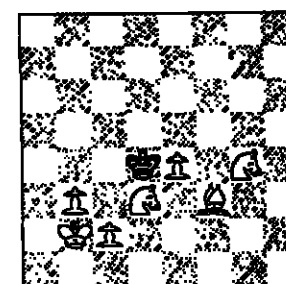
The first diagram is an example of his work from 1837. It is White to play and mate in five. This difficulty lies in getting at Black's king in the corner. If the final position has one knight checking from f7 and the other controlling g7, then what is going to control g8? Attempts to bring the king to help are either too slow or result in stalemate. Also, Black may have the option of moving his h-pawn to h6 or h5 to gain more room for his king.

The first move of the solution is natural enough: 1.Nh5, depriving the king of

its last square, but what do we do after 1...h6?

The answer is beautiful: 2.Ne7 Kh7 and now the mate is achieved by laying a trail of food for the king: 3.Ng6! Kxg6 4.Bg8!! Kxh5 5.Bf7 mate. The final mate is pure (each potential escape square of the black king is covered once only) and economical (every white piece is used).

The second position, also composed by D'Orville in 1837, is an even better variation on the theme. Again it's mate in five.

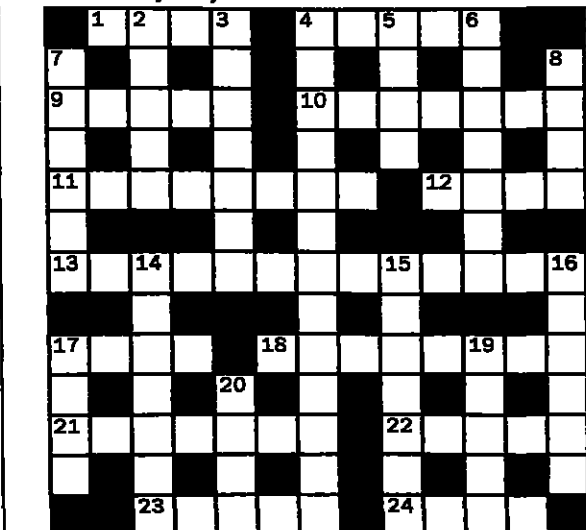


Since Black is at present stalemated, White must start by giving him some freedom – but not enough to escape the net. He starts with 1.Nge5! Kc3 2.c3! Kd2 and now, with the clue of the previous position, you should find the rest.

Again it's the trail of food theme: 3.Nc4+! Kxd3 4.b4!! Kxc4 5.Be2 mate, again a mating position both pure and economical. A magnificent and surprising concoction.

Concise crossword

No.3343 Saturday 5 July



ACROSS

- 1 Paper money (4)
- 2 Meteorological features (5)
- 3 Make law (5)
- 4 Take back (7)
- 5 Fresh-water turtle (8)
- 6 Monarch (4)
- 7 Old type of bicycle (5-8)
- 8 Sliding window frame (4)
- 9 Brave (8)
- 10 Passivity (7)
- 11 Girl's name (5)
- 12 Doing 100mph (3-2)
- 13 Detest (4)

DOWN

- 1 Broadcasting (2,3)
- 2 Tidal river-mouth (7)
- 3 Storm lantern (9,4)
- 4 Entrance (4)
- 5 E African language (7)
- 6 Put a sock in it! (4,2)
- 7 For men only (4)
- 8 Beginning to develop (7)
- 9 Surface discoloration (7)
- 10 Layer of packing material for cylinder-head (6)
- 11 Part of leg (4)
- 12 Put up (5)
- 13 Daze (4)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Concern, 5 Trail (Concentrate), 8 Diver, 9 Lander, 10 Tally-ho, 11 Dirge, 12 Arouse, 14 Crisis, 17 Stoa, 19 Ullate, 22 Epithet, 23 Druid, 24 Enrol, 25 Narrate.
DOWN: 1 Cadet, 2 Novello, 3 Early, 4 Nelson, 5 Thunder, 6 Adder, 7 Turkeys, 12 Austere, 13 Satchel, 15 Spatula, 16 Muton, 18 Osier, 20 Under, 21 Endue.

Bridge Alan Hiron

Game all; dealer South

North
♠ Q 4
♥ K 7 3
♦ Q 8 3
♣ J 9 7 5 4
West
♠ K 10 8 7 5 2
♥ 8 2
♦ A J 9 4
♣ 10
East
♠ 9 6 3
♥ 10 5 4
♦ 10 7 6 2
♣ K Q 8
South
♠ A J
♥ A Q J 9 6
♦ K 5
♣ A 6 3 2

This deal featured two possible "avoidance plays", both of which were missed. I blame myself entirely for the first.

It was to be the last rubber of the evening and things were going well when we reached game all and my partner opened One Heart. West overcalled with One Spade, I raised to Two Hearts, and South went on to game.

Perplexity

Mixed doubles:

Towering beetle galloped – dents strong rains.

If you regroup the above six words into three pairs, then rearrange the letters within each pair, you can unscramble three two-word answers which are numerically connected. A prize of the *Chambers 21st Dictionary* will be awarded to the sender of the first correct answer we open on 10 July. Answers to: Perplexity, *The Independent*,

West led the ♠10 against Four Hearts and this went to the jack, queen and ace. Declarer drew trumps in three rounds, then led a second club. It proved that East now had two tricks in the suit and when, after taking the first, he pushed a spade through, the defenders came to four tricks to defeat the contract.

Can you see the avoidance play that declarer missed? When ♠10 was led at trick one, he should play low from both hands, leaving West on lead. Now, unable to lead either spades or diamonds profitably, West is reduced to playing a trump. Then, after clearing the trumps, South can play the ace and another club and his losing spade goes away on dummy's long club.

And the other overlooked avoidance play? Simply that I should have cut out and gone home before the rubber started. For on the very next hand our opponents bid and made a grand slam.

1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

21 June answers:

The series posed were as follows: 3, 6, 11, 15, 19, 22, 27, 32, 36, 39, 43, 48, 53, 58, 63, 68, 73, 78, 83, 88, 93, 98, 103, 108, 113, 118, 123, 128, 133, 138, 143, 148, 153, 158, 163, 168, 173, 178, 183, 188, 193, 198, 203, 208, 213, 218, 223, 228, 233, 238, 243, 248, 253, 258, 263, 268, 273, 278, 283, 288, 293, 298, 303, 308, 313, 318, 323, 328, 333, 338, 343, 348, 353, 358, 363, 368, 373, 378, 383, 388, 393, 398, 403, 408, 413, 418, 423, 428, 433, 438, 443, 448, 453, 458, 463, 468, 473, 478, 483, 488, 493, 498, 503, 508, 513, 518, 523, 528, 533, 538, 543, 548, 553, 558, 563, 568, 573, 578, 583, 588, 593, 598, 603, 608, 613, 618, 623, 628, 633, 638, 643, 648, 653, 658, 663, 668, 673, 678, 683, 688, 693, 698, 703, 708, 713, 718, 723, 728, 733, 738, 743, 748, 753, 758, 763, 768, 773, 778, 783, 788, 793, 798, 803, 808, 813, 818, 823, 828, 833, 838, 843, 848, 853, 858, 863, 868, 873, 878, 883, 888, 893, 898, 903, 908, 913, 918, 923, 928, 933, 938, 943, 948, 953, 958, 963, 968, 973, 978, 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1818, 1823, 1828, 1833, 1838, 1843, 1848, 1853, 1858, 1863, 1868, 1873, 1878, 1883, 1888, 1893, 1898, 1903, 1908, 1913, 1918, 1923, 1928, 1933, 1938, 1943, 1948, 1953, 1958, 1963, 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013, 2018, 2023, 2028, 2033, 2038, 2043, 2048, 2053, 2058, 2063, 2068, 2073, 2078, 2083, 2088, 2093, 2098, 2103, 2108, 2113, 2118, 2123, 2128, 2133, 2138, 2143, 2148, 2153, 2158, 2163, 2168, 2173, 2178, 2183, 2188, 2193, 2198, 2203, 2208, 2213, 2218, 2223, 2228, 2233, 2238, 2243, 2248, 2253, 2258, 2263, 2268, 2273, 2278, 2283, 2288, 2293, 2298, 2303, 2308, 2313, 2318, 2323, 2328, 2333, 2338, 2343, 2348, 2353, 2358, 2363, 2368, 2373, 2378, 2383, 2388, 2393, 2398, 2403, 2408, 2413, 2418, 2423, 2428, 2433, 2438, 2443, 2448, 2453, 2458, 2463, 2468, 2473, 2478, 2483, 2488, 2493, 2498, 2503, 2508, 2513, 2518, 2523, 2528, 2533, 2538, 2543, 2548, 2553, 2558, 2563, 2568, 2573, 2578, 2583, 2588, 2593, 2598, 2603, 2608, 2613, 2618, 2623, 2628, 2633, 2638, 2643, 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4308, 4313, 4318, 4323, 4

interview

3



ANNEKE MOONMAN

There were four of them. The singer resembled a carnival Barker from a minor Dickens novel, with mutton-chop side-whiskers, his curls-fringed head surmounted by a top hat festooned with circular mirrors, his trousers a ludicrously uncool display of Rupert Bear yellow checks. The guitarist affected a long silver wig and grimed with goofy bonhomie, possibly to distract piss-takers from his suicidal nine-inch platforms. The bassist was a fox, intelligent-looking, Ganymede whose clothes (uniquely in this *galère*) looked as if they might belong to him. The drummer, chewed gum, looked like a Millwall fan and wallowed the skins with an air of abstracted aggression – he might have been lost in some mental synthesis of Free Will and Predestination, but you wouldn't have bet on it.

Slade were a curious-looking bunch; and between 1971 and 1976, they conquered the known world with a string of brilliant, if orthographically-challenged, three-minute singles ("Cum on Feel the Noize", "Coz I Luv U", "Look Wat You Dum"). Slade was the rock band about whom students like me tried to feel snooty, even while dancing ourselves stupid to "Mamma Weer All Crazee Now". We didn't approve of them (my dear, the clothes! and the spelling!), but we couldn't resist them. When the music world divided into heavy metal and sobbing singer-songwriters around 1971, Slade were the noisy Jack-the-lad brigade that didn't muck about with million-watt riffs, or concept albums or with dithering Neil Young introspections. They were just the fun tendency and England lapped them up until their attention was distracted by punk. Meeting Noddy Holder, the band's charismatic frontman, you're instantly pulled back to the time when he was one of those figures who transcend working-class culture and become popular icons, like Henry Cooper, Gary Lineker, Barbara Windsor...

"It wuz a bit of a blur, really, them days," says Holder now, in his unreconstructed Brummie contralto. "All we saw of the Seventies wuz hotels, dressing rooms, airport lounges, the inside of aeroplanes and coaches, the stage, television studios, recording studios... We didn't have mooch sense of the outside world. Any time we did have off, we'd run back home to Wolverhampton and go down the local poob, because that's the one place you'd get a sense of reality. We wouldn't get mobbed there. In fact, if we ever got big-headed, they'd soon pull us down to soize. Because we still knew everybody, and everybody knew us..."

Everybody – ah yes, that word. The secret of Slade's success, in my humble submission, is that they gave the impression that they spoke, or sang, for everyone, enveloped the whole world of Brit-rock

in a fond, beery embrace and told them to have a good time. It's that boundary-crossing feelgood factor that explains why, for instance, Harvey Nichols, the ritzy department store in Knightsbridge, should have thrown taste to the winds two years ago and featured, on the festive wrapping paper given away with their glossy magazine, the image of a beaming Noddy, endlessly repeated *à la* Warhol's soup cans, with the legend "Merry Xmas Everybody", after the band's ubiquitously best-selling seasonal yell. And now everyone seems to want a piece of him. "Even Max Bygraves did a cover version of 'Merry Xmas'," he says proudly. "And the guy who's the Japanese Cliff Richard brought out 'Cum on Feel the Noize' and went to No 1 with it". And so, famously, did Oasis, the nation's most influential band. Noel Gallagher sang "Feel the Noize" on Jools Holland's *Later* TV show last year and it sounded pretty damn



John Walsh meets Noddy Holder

good. "They sent me tickets to their homecoming gig at Maine Road, Manchester," Holder recalls, "and played the song as an encore. It was a great ego-boost for me, 40,000 kids going crazy over a song I wrote 25 years ago. I were dead choofed. It proved that those songs were good. Put in the right environment, they're still valid today."

Valid? Environment? These sociology-degree formulations aren't what you expect from such a guitar-drubbing crowd-pleaser. But then we are having lunch in the Groucho Club, surrounded by a whole roadshow of media analysts, and *The Grimleys*, a one-hour Granada TV film by Ged Mercurio, is about to be released on a critical world. It's an extremely funny rite-of-passage story of a precocious teenager in Dudley, 1975, who falls in love with his English teacher (the gorgeous, wide-eyed Samantha James) and battles for his future with both his sofa-became-slob father (Nigel Planer) and his sadistic PE teacher and love rival (Jack Dee). It's on tonight and you mustn't miss it (but the video will be in the shops on Monday). Noddy Holder appears, under his real name of Neville, as

the school's classical music teacher, amusingly named "Noddy Holder". "It's a bit of an in-joke really," he says genially. "Ged wrote the part specifically for me. He's a Midlands lad, and it's a bit of a piss-take, to put me in as myself, but as far removed as possible from popular notions of me."

The screen Holder is a nice guy, the kind of teacher to whom the troubled adolescents confide their problems. Given that the real-life Noddy was an accomplished musician when barely in his teens, I wondered what his own music teacher was like. "When I think of school back then," he says, "all I can remember us doing in music was stand up and sing 'Ymms. There was a teacher and a piano, but all we did was 'Ymms. But I was singin' in public from when I was six years old." He used to accompany his father to Walsall Labour Club where his father sang "You Made Me Love You" in the haze of roll-ups and brown ale. And Noddy? "Me, I'd sing summat like 'I believe for every drop of rain that falls, A flower grows...' but don't forget, it were a little Michael Jackson treble before me voice broke." He sang the line again in a demented falsetto that made all the windows in Dean Street quiver. "So heart-felt. Big ballads, tear-jerking stuff for the working men after they'd 'ad a few pints. You can't go wrong. Know what I mean? It's that old trick of showbiz – make 'em laff or bring a tear to their eye. I was too young to make 'em laff, so... You learn all the tricks that way, performing on stage."

Manipulation and showbiz are recurring themes in his conversation. Many people have underestimated Mr Holder, thinking him a Midlands hayseed with a shouty voice and a funny wardrobe, who sang a few decent songs and amused working class teenagers. They're quite wrong. I've rarely met a performer so full of gleeful calculation about his and his band's image, their performance, their career path. Slade, for instance, started out as a skinhead band, then called "Ambrose Slade", a name fatally suggestive of an Edwardian ballet critic. Were they – boots and braces apart – ever real skinheads, as in "boover" and queer-bashing? "Ooh now," said Holder with an affronted yelp. "We did the skinhead thing because we wanted an image to set us apart from every other band around at the time, all the long-hairs. And skinheads – well it wasn't a political thing in those days, just a fashion thing. We never encountered any violence." But booking agents were justifiably apprehensive. "It did put a lot of people off booking us, and TV and the media," he concedes, "so we changed it after we had our first hit. We still had the platform boots and shortened trousers, still wore braces and those shirts. But we had the hair feathered differently, and wore more colours. As soon as you get

some colour, you're less threatening. People accepted us over night as a different band."

Their new incarnation was as part of the "glam rock" phenomenon, a couple of years of sequinned lunacy when (inspired by David Bowie, T Rex and Gary Glitter) large truck-driving heterosexuals mimed about unconvincedly in blue eye-shadow and stuck gold and silver WH Smith merit stars on their clothes. Slade were far too tough and street-wise to look good in Bacofoil (especially the drummer). So, if they weren't skinheads and weren't really glam rockers, what were they? Music hall throwbacks? Amazingly, the answer's yes. "Music hall. That wuz it. I got it all from me dad. His favourites were Al Jolson and Max Miller. And I got all the hand movements from Jolson and the clobber from Miller. The clothes I was wearing were straight from the Max Miller handbook."

'We didn't have mooch sense of the outside world. Any time we did have off, we'd run back home to Wolverhampton and go down the local poob'

My God, he's right. Slade was a direct descendant from *The Good Old Days*... "Oh it's obvious now, when I tell yer, but nobody realised then. Everybody nicks stuff. It's the old showbiz tradition, isn't it? I've always watched people on stage, seen how they do it. I loved the way Max Miller would walk on stage and people would be rolling on the ground before he even told a gag, just because he looked the business. Get them on your side, before you open your mouth and you're home and dry. That was my adage, even when I was a little kid." But surely he was too young (at 51) to have seen the Cheeky Chappie in person. "Of course. But I've seen the pictures, and me Dad had the records. When I first heard him, I cracked up. I didn't understand the gags, but it was his delivery. I couldn't believe it. And when I was old enough to understand, I realised it was something you could take into rock 'n' roll. Nobody'd done it. All you had to do was take what he had and make it Seventies. Instead of the white fedora Max had, I had a top hat with mirrors on..." The idea of the hat came to him while watching a mirror ball on a stage. During Slade concerts, they'd kill the lights,

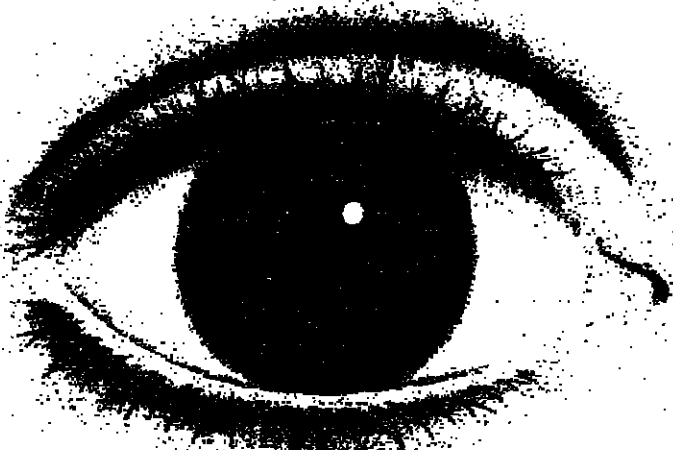
then shine a spotlight on the Noddy titfer, and send searchlight beams all over the squealing auditorium. "It was just 30 seconds out of every show, but people never forgot it. They went berserk. 'Course," he says modestly, "you only need three or four tricks like that in a show and you've got them suckered right away. And with a lot of hit songs to back it up, you were home and dry. We were a top live attraction for years and years around the world, purely on the strength of those tricks."

He was once an accomplished guitarist, with a special fondness for Django Reinhardt, after whom he has named his youngest child, now two and a half. At 11, Holder was playing jazz guitar. Then he adapted the pop tunes on the radio to what he'd learned from his Django-loving teacher. "But I wouldn't say I was a great musician. In fact, I got worse as a technical musician, the more successful I got playing pop. I wasn't doing any difficult stuff like I did when I was young. I concentrated on being the singer." This was aided by a dumbing-down process insisted on by their manager and producer, Chas Chandler, who used also to manage Jimi Hendrix. "Chas always said, keep it short. No solos. Me and Jim, the bassist, we became kings of the three-minute pop song because Chas pushed us into it. Left to ourselves, we'd have been doing 10- or 15-minute songs. But he said, 'No way. You can say all you wanna say in three minutes. Get the first 30 seconds right, get the intro and the hook into the first half-minute and you've got a hit record. If you're going to put a guitar solo in, make it short and memorable, so people can even sing the solo, and it becomes an extra hook.' And he was right."

So that's how it's done. Becoming a rock star, having a hit, having 20-odd other ones, conquering the world – Noddy has a sweet but slightly exasperating way of suggesting that success is about following a few simple rules. He's a man, I think, of enormous optimism, seemingly impervious to negative thoughts. Listening to him talk about his and the band's fortunes since 1976, when punk swept glam rock aside, you'd swear they'd been chart-topping stars right up to last week. In fact, they've been up and down, ignored, feted, gone on nostalgia tours, metamorphosed into a heavy metal combo, been plagiarised (by Kiss, for instance), been rediscovered, anthologised, had their records re-released, turned up in 1/2 comic and been lampooned by Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer. Noddy now sits, a slightly bewildered but lovable figure, pondering offers of acting work, invitations to TV quiz shows and similar signs of iconic status. Whatever the truth of the past 25 years, in Noddy Holder's hindsight, everything – and everybody – has been for the best. Everything's turned out just fine all round.

Serena Mackesy on the mysteries of marketing; Jasper Rees on TV; Robert Hanks on Radio. Turn to PAGE 29

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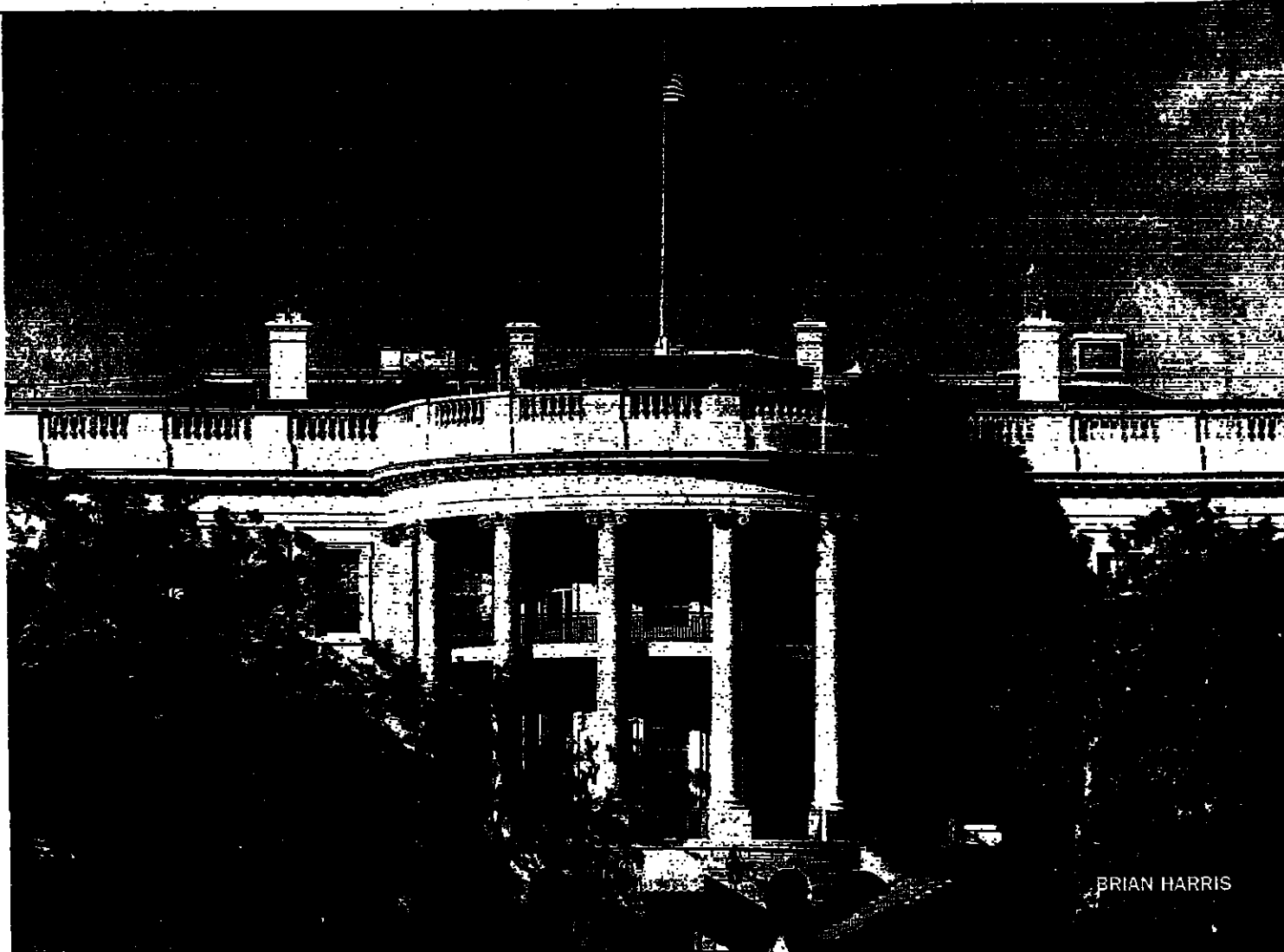
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The House that Alan and Leonard built

On Tuesday, the London Symphony Orchestra will present the world premiere of Leonard Bernstein's 'White House Cantata'. Here, Humphrey Burton, the composer's biographer, traces the troubled history of the Bicentennial musical upon which it is based



BRIAN HARRIS

It looked like a dream ticket for a Broadway hit: Leonard Bernstein, the composer of *On the Town* and *West Side Story*, was to team up with Alan Jay Lerner, author of book and lyrics for *Brigadoon*, *My Fair Lady* and *Camelot*. Yet their show, *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue* (the street address of Washington's White House), underwent agonising out-of-town re-writes and ran for only seven Broadway performances. The actress Patricia Routledge, who sang the female lead, described the show as a "diamond-studded dinosaur". Choreographer Jerome Robbins remarked that "only two titans could have a failure like this". Yet Bernstein went into the production proclaiming that he had "never been so confident, so thrilled, about a show". After its demise, which he acknowledged to be "an immense failure", his life seemed to come apart at the seams. Only two months later, he left his wife Felicia (after 25 years of marriage) to live with

eran producer Roger Stevens, to risk a full-scale production. As a stage musical, *1600* is officially dead. But now Bernstein's music has been re-assembled and re-scored for symphony orchestra with four principal soloists and a virtuoso chorus. Boasting more than 90 minutes of glorious music, most of it never previously heard in this country, *A White House Cantata* (a title dreamt up by Bernstein's friend and personal manager, Harry Kraut) receives its premiere at the Barbican on Tuesday. It promises to be both one of the highlights of the LSO's current season and a personal challenge for the conductor Kent Nagano, who hasn't previously been associated with Bernstein's music.

Depressed by the state of the American nation, Alan Jay Lerner first approached Bernstein in 1972. Despite the Watergate scandal, Nixon's electoral strength was proving unassailable: America seemed headed for an imperial presidency; democracy was being subverted by Nixon and his co-conspirators. Lerner wanted to deliver a sort of wake-up call to the nation in the form of an entertainment with attitude that would remind people of earlier moments when democracy had been under fire. As a vehicle, he proposed the turbulent history of the White House itself. Thirty years earlier, Lerner had worked with a major composer, Kurt Weill, on another epic panorama of US history, *Love Life*. He must have felt that his new subject demanded an equally big musical figure; hence the call to symphonist and showbiz legend Leonard Bernstein, whose liberal background had been common knowledge since Tom Wolfe's loaded but brilliant expose of "radical chic" in *New York* magazine.

Wolfe's acid reportage described a trendy fundraising party that Bernstein's wife had hosted a couple of years previously in aid of the Black Panthers. Already ear-marked by the FBI in the late Forties as a left-wing sympathiser, Bernstein's subsequent run-in with the US State Department in 1953 had prompted him to collaborate with Lillian Hellman on the satirical operetta *Candide*, which equated the House Un-American Activities Committee with the Spanish Inquisition. He acquired an aura of respectability by regular TV appearances and the musical directorship of the New York Philharmonic, first entering the White House for a party celebrating the Washington opening of *West Side Story*. "Such credenzas, such breakthroughs!" he exclaimed about the furniture in a letter to his wife, justifiably proud that a Jewish boy from a Boston suburb had made it to the top. He became sufficiently friendly with President Eisenhower to use a quote of his as the title of his song-cycle *Arias and Barcarolles*. "I like music with a theme," Ike had confided after hearing Bernstein play *Rhapsody in Blue* at a White House concert, "not all them arias and barcarolles."

In the Kennedy era, Bernstein had been a regular visitor to the White House, on one occasion ignoring his wife's whispered warnings in Spanish and occupying the President's favourite rocking chair. "Who's minding the candy store?" he was reported to have asked. Post-Kennedy, he became deeply disillusioned with the Johnson / Kissinger administration. He campaigned for black rights and fought in vain for Eugene McCarthy as the pacifist Democrat candidate against Nixon; his 1971 *Mass*, composed at the height of the Vietnam war, contained an eloquent plea for peace; and,

on the night of Nixon's second inauguration, he conducted Haydn's *Mass in Time of War* in Washington Cathedral, just a few miles from where the presidential party was being entertained with the *1812 Overture*, complete with cannon.

So Bernstein's credentials seemed impeccable. That he had abandoned two musical projects in the 1960s wasn't held against him by Lerner, who had himself fallen on creatively barren times. Like Bernstein, Lerner smoked incessantly, not always nicotine, and bit his nails so fiercely that he always wore white cotton gloves; bloodstained discards would later be found in the men's room. Yet he was reportedly an intensely agreeable personality, immensely persuasive and, like Bernstein, a true son of Harvard. They were of the same age but their only previous collaboration had been 20 years earlier when they concocted a spoof song in honour of their *alma mater*. It should have been a warning to producers and investing angels:

*We're the lonely men of Harvard
Alone, alas, alone are we!
And that's the curse we share,
It's the cross we've got to bear
For our irrefutable superiority.*

Lerner's concept, an idea which Bernstein later said had "lit up his soul", was to use the history of the White House as a metaphor for America. "From its brave, rough beginnings onward through an amazing array of presidencies, wars and all". The same white actor and actress were to play eight different presidents / first ladies (from Washington to Teddy Roosevelt) while the same two black actors, heads of a family dynasty of servants, would watch them come and go. (LWT's *Upstairs Downstairs* was the talk of every TV-watching liberal household in the US at the time). This *Cavalcade* approach was to be given Pirandello-esque weight by having members of the company debate the meaning of the history they were enacting, and some of these "rehearsal" scenes were also set to music. They've been dropped for the LSO version, which will give us the history unadorned. You don't need to be familiar with 19th-century America to enjoy such glittering moments as the stirring and hard-fought decision by representatives of the original 13 states to build the White House on "10 square miles of the Potomac River", the exotic luncheon party thrown there by President Jefferson when he returns from Europe, the brilliant, wicked parody of the British after they've set fire to the White House (in 1812), the debate on slavery carried on by President Monroe and his wife as they prepare to go to bed, or the great ball given on the eve of the Civil War. And that's only the first act.

What promises to work well in the concert hall was much too much of a good thing in the theatre. The device of a musical within a play-within-a-musical was a cumbersome formula. The first producer, Arnold Saint Subber, pulled out in 1975: "I loathed it," he said afterwards. "I tried desperately to get everyone to abandon it."

A chance to sort things out in advance was lost when Arthur Laurents, a tough and shrewd man of the musical theatre, declined to direct. Underneath, Bernstein spoke of his "passionate love of country" and said the musical was "an attempt to

wrest patriotism away from the bigot" (ie Nixon and, a generation earlier, Senator Joe McCarthy). Lerner was equally unrepentant: "We're just telling what we feel," he declared. "I hope we achieved it without being dogmatic." No such luck! Reviewing the February 1976 try-out performance in Philadelphia, which ran for four hours, *Variety* called Lerner's book "stultifyingly ponderous and repetitious". Bernstein's score was longer than *Das Rheingold* but at least it had the unmistakable virtues of tunelessness and virtuosic high spirits. It was the production that bore the brunt of the crisis response. Out went the white stage director, opera-orientated Frank Corsaro. In came Gilbert Moses, who had recently worked on *The Wiz*, an entertaining black version of *The Wizard of Oz*. Most of the moralising rehearsal scenes were cut, Tony Walton's sets and costumes were dumped and the whole thing was re-vamped with an upbeat finale as a somewhat unconvincing celebration of

sistibly catchy, orchestrated to the hilt [by Sid Ramin, and Hershy Kay, who respectively did *West Side Story* and *Candide*]... generally superb and frequently tremendous.

Despite the heartache and the humiliation, the celebrated actress and comedienne Patricia Routledge says she wouldn't have missed the opportunity to work with Bernstein for worlds. "Lenny gave you his respect if you knew your job: Wonderful to work with. Inspiring. But he was saddled with genius and genius can be monstrous. It was a heart-breaking tragedy, really. When we opened in Philly it was an impasse of the worst kind: nobody would cut a line of dialogue or a note of music. Basically you cannot write a musical about a house. A friend said it was like watching a great prehistoric animal lumbering across the stage but there were moments of dazzling light... When it really came to life was when the human element was allowed to emerge. 'Take Care of This



misdeeds go to Washington: Patricia Routledge (left) and Leonard Bernstein (above)



misdeeds go to Washington: Patricia Routledge (left) and Leonard Bernstein (above)

a man half his age. There was a reconciliation, but she died soon afterwards of lung cancer, the same disease that was to claim Alan Jay Lerner in 1986.

Bernstein's first Broadway flop, the 1956 *Candide*, was never without its passionate supporters. But nobody came forward to champion *1600*. Instead, Bernstein used it in the way that medieval stone-masons might raid an abandoned abbey - for raw material. His overture *Slava*, dedicated to the cellist and conductor Mstislav Rostropovich, was a re-working of a chorus number. The most touching song in his 1977 *Songfest* annexes a melody hummed by the *1600* chorus. A witty march ended up in the 1983 for music for his final opera, *A Quiet Place*.

Two years after Bernstein's death in 1990, much loving care went into an attempt to bring *1600* back to the stage. A workshop production based on the original "gypsy" run-through (ie before the tampering began) was mounted at the Indiana University Opera Theater and later transferred to the Kennedy Center in Washington, where it received a clutch of favourable reviews. But it was not enough to convince the professionals, among them the vet-

the forthcoming Bicentennial. According to one of the actors, it was like changing chairs on the *Titanic*.

Bernstein wanted to postpone, but the unconventional financing which Lerner had personally negotiated - \$1m from the Coca-Cola company, whose chairman had been a schoolmate - meant that the show was contractually obliged to play on Broadway that spring, no matter what state it was in. I remember visiting Bernstein at his Watergate hotel suite in April and being appalled by both the mood of hysteria and the total breakdown of relations between composer and lyricist. Lerner was locked in his room writing new material, while Bernstein was attempting to restore savage cuts in his carefully constructed material. Both men were barred from rehearsals. Bernstein's young lover, Tom Cothran, predicted in his diary: "A sure flop due to college production incompetence and speedfreak twitching AJ Lerner - a musical in itself." When the purgatory was over and the show limped on to Broadway, it was duly savaged: "tedious and simplistic", "Bicentennial bore", "a crummy idea". At least the *New York Post*'s critic Marvin Gottfried saw merit in the music. "Irre-

House', for example, that's a beautiful lyrical piece [sung by Mrs Abigail Adams, the first incumbent first lady]. And in the second act, there's an absolutely genius number called 'Duet for One' - two first ladies, the incumbent Julia Grant and the incoming Lucy Hayes, waiting for the presidential election result, a wonderful cliff-hanger presented in Bushy Berkeley fashion, surrounded by lots of ladies with parasols."

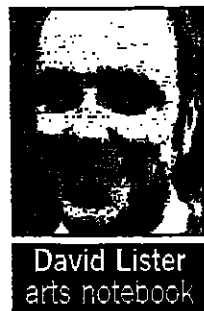
There'll be no parasols at the Barbican on Tuesday, but a prophecy Bernstein made in 1986 may nevertheless come true. At the memorial service for Alan Jay Lerner, he evoked the happier days of their collaboration: "I am very proud of the vast amount of fine fresh material we produced together, and someday, I swear, that material is going to achieve its proper form, and become a show that will make us all proud."

'A White House Cantata' is premiered by the LSO, as part of the City of London Festival, at 7.30pm this Tuesday at the Barbican Centre, London EC2 (0171-638 8891). Humphrey Burton's biography of Leonard Bernstein is published by Faber and Faber

Life for Mike is (bitter) sweet

The *Monty Python* team once imagined the third test match as directed by Ken Russell. Limbs spattered the pitch as the sound of leather on willow was followed by leather gorging flesh. My own fantasy is for *Friends*, which started its new series last night, to be directed by Mike Leigh. Instead of wit, sex appeal and pulchritude, we could have some properly British dysfunctional relationships, sexual hang-ups, and a case of eczema thrown in.

Perhaps Leigh had the same idea. I caught a preview screening of his next film *Career Girls* this week and, without giving too much away, it follows the progress of university friends, some on to



David Lister
arts notebook

careers and nuclear families, others to breakdown and on to the pavement. And yes, one of the girls has dermatitis. What it does remind one is how arbitrary fate is in deciding who among us arriving at university a mess of neuroses and swirling hormones will go on to a form of respectability and who will fall by the way-

side. As so often with Leigh, it is a comedy that keeps you awake nights. I commend him to the producers of *Friends* as guest director for an episode: "The one where Ross tears Rachel's haircut out by the roots".

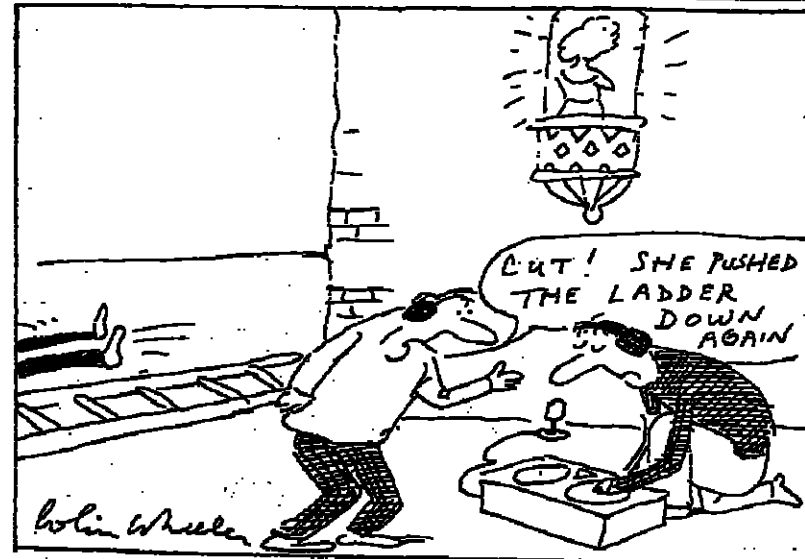
One of the most tawdry pieces of legislation introduced by the Thatcher government, and never repealed by John Major for all his decency, was Section 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act, which made it illegal to "intentionally promote" homosexuality in schools. Since then, many have said that it is not worth getting worked up about as there have been no prosecutions and no one took any notice of

it. But research this week by the redoubtable Jennifer Edwards, director of the National Campaign for the Arts, shows that theatre-in-education companies have been practising self-censorship by deliberately avoiding plays by gay writers and plays that portrayed gay relationships. The mind boggles a little at how these companies have managed to avoid the first category completely.

Nevertheless, as Ms Edwards told *The Stage* this week, "With young people who are trying to understand their own sexuality, the arts can play a useful role." The legislation emanated from the Department of the Environment, but with theatre-in-education a victim. Chris

Smith, the Heritage Secretary and an openly gay MP, is surely the man to press urgently for the repeal of this small-minded law.

Simon Gray, who probably would like it to be made illegal to intentionally promote Stephen Fry, is returning to the West End stage. Having recovered from the trauma of Fry's exit from *Cell Mates* two years ago and the play's subsequent flop, he is back next month with *Life Support*, starring Harold Pinter, old-time collaborators unlikely to do a bunk. Gray will only say it is about "a man of letters, an accomplished embellisher of the uneventful". It only needs a second act trip to Bruges



to start sounding very suspicious indeed.

Finding a new take on *Romeo and Juliet* is not easy after Baz Luhrmann's brilliant LA beach movie version. But Nazis talk-

ing books are about to come out with a fresh approach. Their recording, directed by Martin Sheen, stars Sheen himself and Kate Beckinsale as the lovers, a case of a *Romeo* and Juliet who actually live

together in real life. Does this make for a passion enhanced by genuine love or dulled by breakfast-table familiarity? The former I'm sure, though I wouldn't mind hearing the arguments on the out-takes.

Meet Professor Playwright

Terry Eagleton, wildman of Eng Lit, has a nice sideline going in dramaturgy. Dominic Cavendish asks him why. Below, Paul Taylor sees his new play 'Disappearances'

Here's a word of advice for academics from Terry Eagleton: "If you're going to write creatively you should always choose drama, because, like bingo and bowling, it's a good way of getting you out of the house." The world-renowned Marxist critic genially proffers this thought as we sit in a dusty chamber in the London School of Economics before an evening lecture. It should sound drab but it comes across as alarming. Has the radical who spent the Seventies dancing on the grave of The Author, who exposed the sinister ideologies propping up "the canon", and who even called, in his best-selling primer *Literary Theory*, for the death of literature, become a half-hearted dilettante? When you hear Jonathan Church, who is staging Eagleton's *Disappearances* at the Salisbury Playhouse, describe it as "post-socialist", you start to wonder.

Eagleton's fellow academics at Oxford are, apparently, only too happy to treat his playwriting as harmless fun. "They regard it as a hobby, much like playing snooker or jogging," he says, chuckling. "They maintain a polite silence." And what about Eagleton, who, with his softly-spoken expectations and regulation crumpled canvas suit, seems decorum personified? In the last 10 years, he has had three stage-plays professionally produced - and there's been a radio play about the Great Hunger and a draft piece about Wittgenstein that got *revised* by Derek Jarman. He's not much bothered by dead-lines: "When my agent says, 'They can't put it on this year', I go 'So what?' But he is really only playing around."

On the face of it, *Disappearances* is the antithesis of hard-hitting. There are a lot of teasing autobiographical hints - both the author and Kaman, the central character, went to Trinity, Cambridge and are now globe-trotting lecturing types, yet both see themselves as "outsiders" (Eagleton on account of his Salford working-class roots, Irish immigrant background and leftist tendencies; Kaman as a dissident poet-in-exile). The case for doing nothing and staying put appears to win the day. Isn't *Disappearances* a thinly disguised act of self-justification from a man who has written about "the strategic goal of human emancipation - the production of better people through the socialist transformation of society", who tags himself "the barbarian in the citadel", but has actually been sitting pretty in Oxford for nearly 30 years?

"The problem is this kind of polarised thinking that imagines that, if people aren't everything, they're nothing," Eagleton retorts. "There is something in between the ivory tower and the Romantic image of the writer who is going to get things done, and that's where the interesting things happen. Kaman says that art is an end in itself, that we too should be ends in ourselves, and that's the politics of it. Any politically com-

mitted person coming to this play will not get a comfortable ride." If that sounds like a catch-all, it's worth considering Eagleton's other plays, where "doing nothing" has been given a fiercely post-colonial reading.

The professor's rash of playwriting was brought on by an interest he developed in Oscar Wilde at the end of the 1980s. *Saint Oscar*, packed with his own epigrams, was, on one level, an act of self-discovery: "I was brought up within an English educational system where I was trained to be a critic, and, for all the gains of that, one has to sacrifice some creativity. I began to rediscover it through drama." Now, at the age of 54, he has acquired a reputation for living and breathing his ancestry, singing Irish ballads whenever possible, and dividing his time between Oxford and



Modest Marxist: Terry Eagleton

Photo: Emma Brown

Dublin. On another level, his interest in Wilde located the subversive spirit of the colonised subject. Eagleton cherishes Wilde's determination to be an actor rather than an activist: "If, like Wilde, your history has been largely one of colonial disruption, you are less likely to be enamoured of stable representational forms. You will find yourself a parodist and a parasite." In *The White, the Gold and the Gangrene*, his second play, the martyr hero James Connolly says almost nothing throughout. Kaman, meanwhile, hopes to conduct a "private anti-colonial campaign".

This paradoxical inactivity seems to encapsulate what, if anything, Eagletonian theatre is on about; it may seem modest, not Marxist, but it is deliberately aware of its limitations. "At least we can look at the kind of privileged structure that makes it possible to even write a play," he argues. "I don't think British theatre seems even to think about that." There is a rare burst of passion: "People should do what they can do, or they can do best, and shouldn't keep beating their breast. Lord, am I contributing to the greater good? I'm not making any claims for a resurgence of radical theatre. In the act of writing, in the white heat of writing, you can have the fantasy that you are in control and doing something that could be potentially transformative. Sometimes that's true." He frowns through his little round specs. "But only in a small way."

THE REVIEW
Disappearances
Salisbury Playhouse Studio, Salisbury

Is writing poetry a self-indulgent activity in a world of suffering and oppression? Does the poet have a duty to sign up to a cause - to swap the hedonism of free linguistic play for the hairshirt of activism? Or does the art form have its own built-in paradoxical vindication: the sublime uselessness of poetry being itself a form of political resistance and subversion? To put it bluntly, "Why should a poet be more responsible than a plumber?" These are the kinds of questions posed by Kaman, the celebrated self-exiled bard who dominates *Disappearances*, a powerful new play by Terry Eagleton which dramatises, through the dilemmas confronting this character, the conflicting claims of disengagement and commitment.

Elevated to mythical status in his Third World homeland (where he suffered imprisonment and torture for his opposition to the military dictatorship), Cambridge-educated Kaman has since withdrawn into a world of words and become "a kind of spiritual Secretary-General" on the global star-poets circuit. In Jonathan Church's admirably lucid and eloquent studio production at Salisbury Playhouse, Rudolph Walker may not be totally on top of all of Kaman's many lines but he has the measure of the man's flawed, larger-than-life personality and of the drunken, sardonically self-mocking performance Kaman has chosen to give of being the West's "pet savage".

It's the fate of the post-colonial to find himself redesigned in the image of the colonisers, then Kaman gives them back this image artfully defaced. We see him squiffily teasing a constipated proper American PhD student (Mark Davison); his acceptance speech for a Cambridge D Lit veers into a fantasy stand-up routine which deviates with heretical abandon from the poeticisms of the prepared script. There's indulgence, arrogance and self-disgust in this comfortable / uncomfortable life of groupies, South Bank readings, and anticipated Nobel laureateship. Then revolutionaries from his homeland and the idealistic young daughter (Sharon Lee) he has not seen for many years plead with him to use his influence to help over-



Politics 'n' poetry in a head-to-head play

ROBERT WORMAN

throw the vicious regime out there and to be the symbolic founding father of a new order. In a recent *LRB* review of a book dealing with the postcolonial condition, Eagleton, who is Thomas Warton Professor of English at Oxford, wrote that "When it comes to affirming an identity without colluding with the logic of those who have stripped you of it, you just have to try it and see what happens."

But it's the achievement of this play to pull you into the mind and guts of a man whose experiences compel him to the different view that those who take over power inevitably take over the values of their predecessors and that it's a poet's duty to "keep faith with failure". Involvement is a betrayal of those whom power has crucified.

Performed on Sarah Williamson's strikingly composite set (elegant study carpet shading out into scorched tussocks of grass at the back), *Disappearances* is more jaw-jaw than war-war (though jaw-jaw of a superior order). The drama in the play's second half does come to a nicely knotted head, however, when a smoothly blackmailing British intelligence agent simultaneously angers Kaman into wanting to take on a public role and makes that move impossible by threatening to endanger his daughter's career. Secretly protecting her interests entails, of course, plummeting in the girl's estimation; a painful irony that raises the emotional temperature of this intellectually agile, thought-provoking play.

To See 12 July. Booking: 01722 330333

Lucas Cranach the Elder, artist by appointment to the court of Frederick the Wise of Wittenberg, probably painted more pictures of naked women than any other man in history. His *Venus Restraining Cupid* of 1509 is generally reckoned to be the first full-frontal nude depiction of a classical goddess in German art, and its success encouraged Cranach to spend much of the rest of his long life furnishing the aristocrats of 16th-century Saxony with mild and charming erotica. He became Northern Europe's chief specialist supplier of nubile, mythologically inspired painted ladies - perfectly calculated, it seems, to charm bored courtiers living in a cold climate. His art made him rich, and when he died, he was the most celebrated painter in all of Germany.

Cranach's imaginary harem survives more or less intact, albeit much dispersed and somewhat altered by conditions of modern museum display. The majority of his slender and doe-eyed temptresses were originally devised for the decoration of a single owner in a private room. Now they proposition the general public. Several of them may be found doing just that in the modest exhibition of a dozen or so Cranachs currently at the National Gallery in London.

To borrow a phrase from the great art historian Erwin Panofsky, Cranach was "the very model of a major minor master". He was no pioneer. His Italian contemporaries, Titian and Giorgione, preceded him in depictions of the naked Venus (the issue of precedence apart, Cranach never did paint a picture to rival Giorgione's *Sleeping Venus* in Dresden or Titian's *Venus of Urbino* in the Uffizi). But he was certainly the first northern European artist to understand that the Renaissance revival of interest in classical subject matter provided painters with a licence for the manufacture of erotic art. His chief invention, the Cranach nude, is more original and interesting than she is generally made out to be.

She is instantly recognisable because, although she might wear many mythological disguises, she is always the same woman - or at least, for there is not too much reality about her, the same dream of one. Sometimes she pretends to be Venus, sometimes Eve. Sometimes she travels incognito, as a water nymph. Sometimes, with a sly, knowing expression on her face, acknowledging the imposture even as she plays the role, she impersonates Lucretia, sword in hand, nobly insisting that she prefers suicide to the loss of her honour. But we know it is not true, and she knows that we know. Her dissembled chasteness is as transparent as the gauzy wisp of drapery she often clutches to her, like Salome down to her very last veil.

There is something doll-like about the Cranach girl, and something troublingly childish about her, too. A *fille fatale* with bedroom eyes, she is a Renaissance Lolita. Cranach was so attached to this dream creature that he probably could not have varied her had



'The Judgement of Paris' by Lucas Cranach the Elder
COURTESY OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

nude, but the few bits and pieces that she does wear - she has a marked fondness, in particular, for bejewelled chokers and extravagant broad-brimmed hats - make her look even more undressed than if she were stark naked.

Having started his career as a painter of religious subjects, Cranach continued to produce altarpieces and devotional panels - albeit of increasing feculence - until the very end of his life. He had always been, and always remained, an extremely competent and prolific painter of grave, quiet, highly realised portraits, very much in the northern European tradition. He did not only paint Eves and Venuses and Lucretias, in other words. But he did paint enough of them to have been damned, for ever, as a fundamentally trivial artist: a man who sold his soul and became a more lucky to the decadent tastes of the court he served, a painter whose works, in Max Friedländer's words, "are immediately recognisable and invariably elicit a fleeting, superior smile".

There is some truth to this. Few would argue that compared to Italian Renaissance contemporaries such as Raphael and Michelangelo, or indeed compared to his closest friend in Wittenberg, that most fervent of early Protestant reformers, Martin Luther, Cranach was indeed something of a lightweight. But the dream envisioned by that curious, walk-like ideal girl, the Cranach nude, was still very much a dream of its time - and it was just as much a dream of renewal, in its own way, as Raphael's dream of reviving the grand lost world of classical antiquity or Luther's dream of reviving the pure true faith of early Christianity. The universal fantasy of going back, of returning to some original, unblemished state could take many forms in the first half of the 16th century.

Cranach explained this, so to speak, in one of his last and best mythologies, a picture based on the ancient theme of *The Fountain of Youth* (not included in the National Gallery exhibition: it is to be found in the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin). The fountain in question is envisaged, by the painter, more like a swimming pool. A mass of old women huddle to one side, awaiting their turn in the magic waters; the pool itself is full of laughing, splashing figures. Those who step out, having bathed, have been restored to nubile youth and beauty. They have become, in short, Cranach nudes. The picture is certainly quaint, but it has its own emotional intensity and, as the work of a very old man (Cranach painted it in 1546), may contain an element of autobiographical confession. It is, perhaps, a kind of coda to all his other mythologies, an account of what the ideal girl had represented all along - a fantasy not of sex, pure and simple, but of being remade as good as new, a sensual dream of rebirth, *rinascita*, Renaissance.

"Cranach: A Closer Look". National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, London WC2 (0171-839 3321). To 7 Sep

The virgin rebirth

Lucas Cranach probably painted more naked women than any other artist in history. But he only ever had one ideal figure in mind: the true Renaissance woman. By Andrew Graham-Dixon

he tried; even when we see three naked goddesses in one picture, they actually turn out to be the same one figure multiplied. The National Gallery's exhibition includes a woodcut, *The Judgement of Paris*, in which we see Venus, Athena and Juno showing off their charms to a sleepy and grizzled knight in a chilly alpine landscape. They are so similar to one another (almost identical, in fact, despite tiny differences in hairstyle and jewellery) that Paris's task seems quite impossible. The subject is clearly a pretext for showing the same girl from three angles - front, back and side. It is a way of giving her more completely to the viewer, as if she were a figurine to be turned this way and that in the hands.

Cranach was in many respects the epitome of the German 16th-century painter, following in the wake of Italian innovations, yet unwilling or unable to abandon the northern Gothic traditions in which he had been trained. The slightly disconcerting, pubescent char-

acter of his ideal girl owes at least something to that tradition. Cranach might have followed the artists of the Italian Renaissance in adopting the subject matter of classical myth, but his visual imagination remained stubbornly northern European. So the Cranach girl bears no relation to Titian's ripe Venuses. With her small head, her narrow, sloping shoulders and her long legs, she is a neo-Gothic creature - a direct descendant of the naked Eve painted by the Limbourg brothers in their celebrated illuminated manuscript for the Duc de Berry, the *Très Riches Heures*.

Cranach's ingenuity in making this quintessentially sexless figure seem sexy should not be underestimated. He does it partly through the poses which he has her adopt, partly through the expression which he puts on her face (self-possessed, inviting, orientally languorous), and partly through the way in which he clothes her with such conspicuous inadequacy. She is hardly ever entirely

David Benedict WEEK IN REVIEW

overview

critical view

on view

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THE MONOLOGUE Seven Sacraments

Artangel and Gloria present Neil Bartlett's dramatic solo meditation upon Nicolas Poussin's seven paintings known as the *Seven Sacraments* which depict the stages of the body from birth to death. Set within a working hospital, Bartlett is joined by artist Robin Whitmore and lit by Rick Fisher.

Paul Taylor found it inspiring. "Watching this show, anyone would find their equivalent cultural contradictions illuminated." "Makes one want rush off to examine the original paintings... best of all, he reminds us that anything is possible in theatre," gloried *The Guardian*. "A curving route between aesthetics and autobiography," admired *The Times*. "A curious, original and at times deeply moving show... a heartfelt elegy for the death of faith," wondered *The Telegraph*. "Invigorating art history... The use of a medical metaphor as an alternate means of reading these immensely complex paintings is entirely apt," approved *The Scotsman*. "A mixture of incantatory quotation and subversive modern campervan," sniffed *The Standard*.

At the Royal London Hospital, London E1 tonight, Sunday and Monday at 8pm (0181-741 2311).

A dramatic, elegiac collision between past and present, art and autobiography. The originals are in Edinburgh's National Gallery.

THE FILM One Fine Day

Michael Hoffman directs Michelle Pfeiffer and man of the moment George Clooney in a parental, boy-meets-girl mobile-phone romance. They've both got five-year-old kids, he's a fiery columnist, she's uptight in advertising. When they first meet, they don't get along. (I think you guessed that.)

Ryan Gilbey found it "a wistful fantasy". Clooney effortlessly appealing but Pfeiffer more impressive. "She mugs horribly while he spends most of his time with his head hanging down, presumably in shame. The whole thing is filmed in beige-O-Vision," scoffed *The Spectator*. "Irksomely frenetic... the principals prove unable to communicate their attraction through the sex-war banter," scolded *Time Out*. "Hokum... Cary Grant and his various partners managed this sort of fantasy," said *The Guardian*. "Pfeiffer could do this role in her sleep. Unfortunately she mostly does," yawned the *FT*. "Has its moments of charm but they are few and far between," winced *The Telegraph*. "An easy charm and a light touch: just what romantic comedy requires," approved *The Times*.

Cert PG, 108 minutes, on general release.

The phrase "light entertainment" springs to mind. The stress is on the word "light".

THE PLAY Waiting for Godot

Sir Peter Hall returns to Beckett's great, groundbreaking, tragic-comedy which he directed 42 years ago in its English premiere. Part of his audacious *Old Vic* season of classic plays, it stars Alan Howard and Ben Kingsley as the two tramps (with Irish accents), plus Denis Quillley as Pozzo and Greg Hicks as Lucky.

Paul Taylor saluted a "moving as well as very funny" production with excellent performances which "gave an underlying dignity to this derelict couple". "One of the chief contenders for the best play of the 20th century... attention to the changes of mood and tempo makes this production so rewarding," revelled *Time Out*. "Triumphantly passes every test... They leave you in no doubt that you are watching a cross-section of fallible humanity... a tender, touching rapport," hailed *The Times*. "Denis Quillley presents a Pozzo of grandiloquent splendour... Greg Hicks as Lucky is a landmark piece of Beckettian performance," cheered the *Mail*. "A triumph... not for a moment does this great play flag," cried the *FT*. "Two and a half hours of this portentous cobbler's," sneered *The Telegraph*.

At the Old Vic, London SE1 (0171-928 7616) 9, 17, 19, 29 July at 7.30pm; 20, 24, 26 matinees. In rep until December.

A tremendous, richly eloquent reading of a great play, glowing with humour and sadness. The highlight of Peter Hall's season.



Heroes and a few villains

The Queen by Ben Fimlott (HarperCollins, £9.99) The ex-Chairman of the Fabian Society gives our hereditary ruler a gentle ride. She emerges as dedicated and down-to-earth, scolding her spendthrift mother: "Oh do grow up!" Fimlott takes much the same line as his previous subject, Harold Wilson, who was "delighted by the Queen". One is grateful for the acerbic presence of Jan Morris who, on the eve of the Waleses' wedding, wrote to *The Times* recording her "revulsion and foreboding".

Bob Marley by Cedella Booker with Anthony Winkler (Penguin, £7.99) The reggae star's mother tells the story of her son. She describes his scapegrace father as "a kind and generous soul", though he gave his son only "two copper pennies". There's little about Bob's music, but Mother Booker claims he cured her glaucoma with ganja. The singer blamed his fatal cancer on the unfaithfulness of one of his partners. The story is permeated with tragedy - Bob's half-brother was shot at 19 - but the Jamaican *patois* is a joy.

Bertrand Russell by Ray Monk (Vintage, £9.99) Covering Russell's first half-century, this massive chronicle reveals how the philosopher's charm and brilliance ("Great God in boots, the ontological argument is sound") could give way to inexplicable emotional savagery. In a compelling narrative, Monk deftly braids the main strands of his subject's life: the sexual adventurer, the public figure of unshakeable principle and profound thinker.

Mr Nice by Howard Marks (Minerva, £5.99) "Oxford is no business school," declares the Balliol-educated drug runner, and you can't help but agree. The pages of his memoir oscillate between caviar breakfasts and the clicking of handcuffs. It makes for a racy yarn with plenty of globetrotting

colour, though his roguish charm wears thin.

Augustus John by Michael Holroyd (Vintage, £9.99) The biographer acknowledges that John's reputation has now "fallen off the map". His inability to capitalise on a prodigious talent endows this absorbing work with a tragic power. Concentrating on John's early years before he became a parody of the priapic artist, Holroyd offers entertaining cameos of his circle, such as the poet Arthur Symonds, who believed he was Pope.

Cary Grant: A Class Apart by Graham McCann (Fourth Estate, £7.99) "Everybody wants to be Cary Grant," the star remarked. "Even I want to be Cary Grant." Like its subject, this perceptive

biography is a class act. McCann gives us all the strange detail about how Bristol-born Archie Leach, son of an alcoholic tailor and a clinically depressed mother, became "the man from dream city". While allegations of bisexuality are dismissed, we learn that Grant tripped on LSD in the Fifties. The book soars when McCann analyses Grant's immaculate screen persona.

With Nails by Richard E Grant (Picador, £6.99) A mixture of lurid froth and droll perceptions makes up the movie diaries of the *With Nails* star. His *aperçus* on the absurdities of the biz are gentle enough - he wants to keep working. In the throes of emotion, Grant's prose comes unstuck: "The love felt is almost unbearable in its overwhelm."

His Holiness by Carl Bernstein and Marco Politi (Bantam, £7.99) The authors are admirably objective about this daunting figure, but where they really score is in uncovering new material. Reagan's adviser described the President's relationship with the Vatican as "one of the greatest secret alliances of all time". Reagan blocked aid to family planning programmes, while the Pope gave tacit support on Cruise missiles. Together they propelled the fall of Communism.

My Dark Places by James Ellroy (Arrow, £6.99) Tough, terse, revelatory, this is memoir as *film noir*. Ellroy's mother was murdered, aged 42, in 1958. His father died and Ellroy took to drink, drugs and crime before discovering a talent for hard-boiled crime writing. Driven by obsession, he pursues the seamy events of 40 years ago. No killer emerges but Ellroy is relentless: "I will never stop looking." Despite diversions, there's scarcely a stray syllable. There can never have been a book like it. Christopher Hirst

Travels and adventures

The Lost Tribe by Edward Marriott (Picador, £6.99) Not so much travel as exploration, this should become a classic. Deep in the jungles of Papua New Guinea, the Lost Tribe believes it knows why it is alone: it has killed, if not eaten, everyone else for miles around. Ignorant, badly dressed men (that's just the government officials) try to keep Marriott away.

Clear Waters Rising: a mountain walk across Europe by Nicholas Crane (Penguin, £7.99) Nothing is more enjoyable than a 10,000km, 17-month solo hike across mountain ranges from Finisterre to Istanbul - made by someone else. Newly married Crane survives snow, a bear and a wonky knee.

Bullet Up the Grand Trunk Road by Jonathan Gregson (Sinclair-Stevenson, £12.99) Half a century after Partition, a classic motorbike takes Gregson over an ancient trade route across India and Pakistan. This is an epic account of how desperate men took their life in their hands. And that's just the roads.

On the Crofters' Trail: in search of the clearance Highlanders by David Craig (Pimlico, £12) Britain has its lost tribes too. In a massive ethnic cleansing operation, 19th-century landlords emptied the Highlands and Islands. Craig tracks down the victims' descendants.

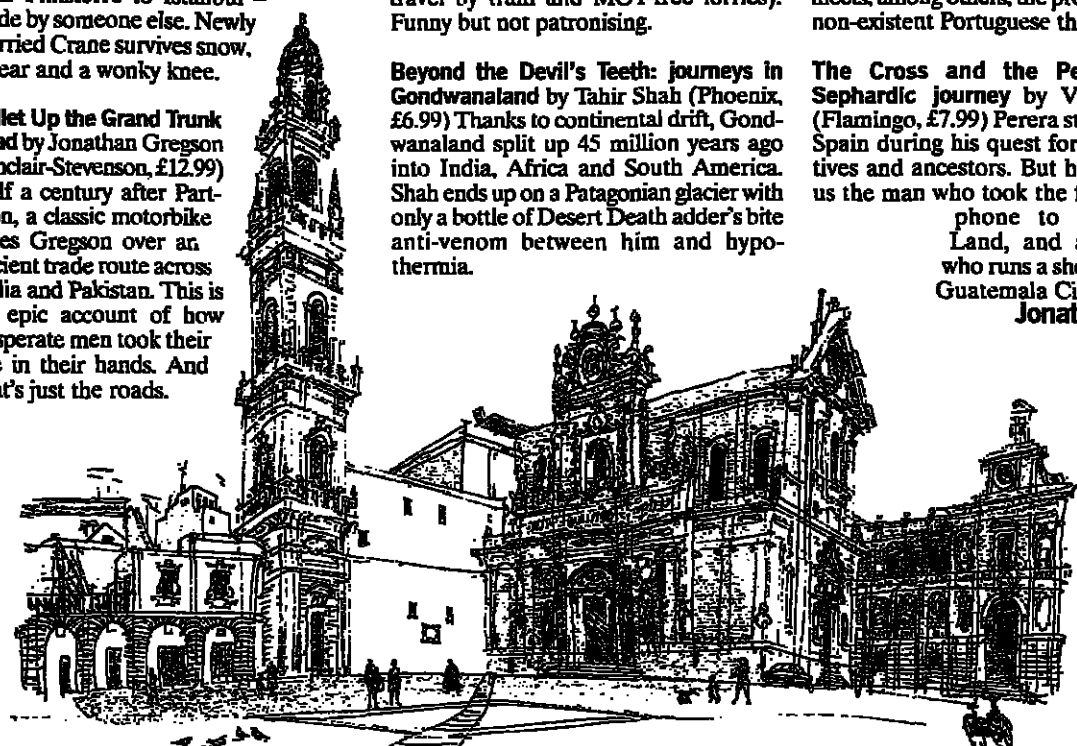
Old Serpent Nile: a journey to the source by Stanley Stewart (Flamingo, £6.99) During their trip along the Nile from the delta to the Mountains of the Moon, Stanley and girlfriend become known on the river grapevine as the Foreigners Who Travel by Barge (they also travel by train and MOT-free lorries). Funny but not patronising.

Beyond the Devil's Teeth: journeys in Gondwanaland by Tahir Shah (Phoenix, £6.99) Thanks to continental drift, Gondwanaland split up 45 million years ago into India, Africa and South America. Shah ends up on a Patagonian glacier with only a bottle of Desert Death adder's bite anti-venom between him and hypothermia.

In the Country of Country by Nicholas Dawidoff (Faber, £12.99) Dawidoff shows it is more interesting to read about country music than listen to its more maudlin excesses. A Yankee goes to the South in search of the sounds that gave us Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash and Bruce Springsteen.

Backwards Out of the Big World: a voyage into Portugal by Paul Hyland (Flamingo, £7.99) Surely one of the great book titles of the decade, but the language between the covers is occasionally too heightened for its own good. Hyland meets, among others, the pretender to the non-existent Portuguese throne.

The Cross and the Pear Tree: a Sephardic journey by Victor Perera (Flamingo, £7.99) Perera stays mainly in Spain during his quest for Jewish relatives and ancestors. But he also brings us the man who took the first gramophone to the Holy Land, and an uncle who runs a shoe shop in Guatemala City. Jonathan Sale



The 'lovely three-dimensional space' of the Piazza del Duomo in Lecco, southern Italy (above), and (below), the familiar shape of the Leaning Tower of Pisa - 'clear and inspired in conception and perfectly realised: an idea of staggering simplicity' - both drawn by David Gentlemen during one of his many trips to this 'beautiful, energetic, inventive and civilised country' and taken from his lusciously illustrated book, 'David Gentlemen's Italy' (Hodder, £30)

Far-flung fiction

Brownout on Breadfruit Boulevard by Timothy Mo (Paddleless Press, £5.99) Mo's self-published romp through sex and scandal in the Philippines got right up liberal nostrils with its scatological and gleefully non-PC outlook. It won't win him any UN grants, but these tall tales from post-Marcos Manila engagingly blend a satirical scorn for corrupt bosses (and western dupes) with affection for the hard-pressed *pinoy* in the street - or rather, the bar.

Hallucinating Foucault by Patricia Duncker (Picador, £5.99) In this tense and witty thriller-of-ideas, a student sets out to find the mythical French writer Paul Michel, sleuthing south from Paris to Provence through a hot summer. Don't be deterred by Duncker's *avant-garde* credentials, as the quest has real pace and flair on top of its sultry mood of delicious *amour fou*.

After Hannibal by Barry Unsworth (Penguin, £6.99) Gormless Brits in Umbria vainly try to do up their rotting piles, only to sink into a swamp of skulduggery. As a portrait of innocents abroad and a sardonic glimpse into the deep-dyed duplicity of Italian life, this leaves John Mortimer looking bland. But it won't do a thing for property values in Chianti.

A Heart so White by Javier Marias (Harvill, £7.99) This year's IMPAC Prize winner floats dreamily between Havana and Madrid, past and present, in pursuit of the truth behind a family tragedy. You don't read Marias for the plot, but his writing has a heady, atmospheric richness that lingers like the finest perfume.

Need by Nik Cohn (Minerva, £6.99) Summer in New York City, and four misfits gather at the zoo as an apocalyptic sect proclaims the Last Days in the subway. As a pop journalist, Cohn has always had a matchless ear for the loony tunes of overheated urban life (he wrote the original *Saturday Night Review*). This novel delivers its Manhattan madness with doses of cooling irony.

Year of the Jaguar by James Maw (Sceptre, £6.99) A footloose Englishman's foray through Mexico in search of his lost father turns up salty expat characters and - more important - some splendid evocations of the land and its people. You can't avoid the shades of Greenland in these parts, but Maw skips the tropical clichés to keep his gringo's-eye view fresh and keen.

The Emigrants by W G Sebald (Harvill, £7.99) Hovering on a cusp between fiction and memoir, this finely wrought reflection on the *émigré's* plight mocks the rules of genre with the fierce nostalgia of its prose. It traces the fortunes of four 20th-century German Jews as they fetch up on the strange shores of exile: Manchester, New York, Constantinople.

Oyster by Janette Turner Hospital (Virago, £7.99) In the Queensland desert, a sinister leader sets up a messianic cult in a one-horse opal-mining town and draws the troubled and the gullible to him. No writer since Patrick White has caught so well the parched Australian outback and the fevers it can breed among the lost and lonely.

The Flanders Panel and The Dumas Club by Arturo Pérez-Reverte (Harvill, £6.99 each) Mysterious paintings, lost manuscripts, chess moves, logical conundra, chases across Europe in search of clues: imagine Calvino crossed with Conan Doyle, and you have the measure of these stylish thrillers. The Spanish maestro cooks up one fiendish puzzle after another, but never loses his light touch. Boyd Tonkin



Beach-bag blockbusters

A Vicious Circle by Amanda Craig (Fourth Estate, £6.99) One of those rare novels that delivers a thrill of recognition on every page - and not just for the literary hacks it lampoons. Following the transformation of Mary Quinn from "Slouch" Club waitress into ruthless hack-ette, Craig's *novel* takes in Nineties London: takes in doomed affairs, single motherhood, the crumbling NHS and grizzled young men fonder of designer kettles than of their wives.

How Stella Got Her Groove Back by Terry McMillan (Penguin, £5.99) Tired of loading the dishwasher and driving her son to Little League practice, Californian banker Stella Payne decides to take a vacation from the real world. Six new swimsuits later, she's sipping piña colodas by a Caribbean pool and checking out Winston Shakespeare, a 21-year-old Adonis.

Accordion Crimes by E Annie Proulx (Fourth Estate, £6.99) Proulx's stories of immigrant America are as raw as a Minnesota winter. Following the travels of a green accordion as it passes from hand to hand over 100 years, she rehearses the songs of exile of four generations of Americans.

Next of Kin by Joanna Trollope (Black Swan, £6.99) When Robin Meredith persuades Caro, a cowgirl from California, to share his workaday Midlands farm, he doesn't expect her to drop dead from a brain tumour. Nor does he expect his brother to take her death so badly. As unobtrusively plotted as the gentle countryside it describes.

Cause of Death by Patricia Cornwell (Warner Books, £5.99) It's New Year's Eve and the body of a local investigative reporter has been found on the bottom of an icy river. Another tough case for ballys Kay Scarpetta and her sidekick, niece Lucy (computer whizz and outed lesbian) and police captain Pete Marino.

Catwalk by Georgina Newberry (Warner Books, £5.99) Don't be put off by the trashy cover; this pastiche of the fashion biz is a classy little number. Set in the corridors of a Condé Nast-like glossy mag, it records a summer of King's Road drinks parties and romantic encounters for the mag's surprisingly likeable editor and her deeply camp deputy.

Fall on Your Knees by Ann-Marie MacDonald (Vintage, £6.99) Set in Nova Scotia's Cape Breton, this haunting saga shows its author to be as intimate with small cruelties as her fellow-countrywoman Margaret Atwood. Married at 13, Lebanese-born Matera gives birth to a child she can never love. Three more daughters follow, as does the First World War and a run of peculiar tragedies.

Bombardiers by Po Bronson (Minerva, £6.99) Less of a novel than a high-adrenaline trashing of corporate America, this wicked depiction of West Coast bond dealers will appeal to anyone who's seen the inside of a city dealing room. Given a block of overpriced bonds to offload, they develop the "bombardier" mentality: flying as close to the wind as possible without risking psychological breakdown. Emma Hagestadt

Making history

The Gunpowder Plot by Antonia Fraser (Weidenfeld, £12.99) The Jacobean Catholic laity had been suspected of treason for so long that they decided to commit it. Fraser's even-handed account, informed by her upbringing, makes clear that a plot was encouraged by *agents provocateurs* and discouraged by the Jesuits, who still died for it.

Hitler's Willing Executioners by Daniel Jonah Goldhagen (Abacus, £9.99) This controversial book pushes anti-revisionism to bizarre lengths: all Germans had been inculcated with an "exterminationist" anti-Semitism and were prepared to collaborate in the Holocaust. Does this include exiles? Or assimilated Jews? Goldhagen makes a case, but he is prosecuting an entire people.

Stalin by Edward Radzinski (Sceptre, £7.99) Writing a tyrant's biography forces historians into odd complications; Radzinski obsessively tells us how vile Stalin was to the point where condemnation becomes perverse praise. Stalin wanted to be a tyrant and learnt well from his mentors and rivals. Radzinski knocks many legends on the head, but never quite makes sense of the man.

The Six Wives of Henry VIII by Alison Weir (Pimlico, £8.99) This is heritage history as far as its subject matter goes, but Weir devotes considerable intelligence to telling the story and giving it a context. Romance is absent: women married Henry

for power and security in a world of judicial murder and constant disease.

A People's Tragedy by Orlando Figes (Pimlico, £12.50) Figes views the Russian Revolution as inevitable, and inevitably atrocity-packed; the old order just went on too long. He is brilliant on the sweep of events and underlying economic forces, and on the individuals made and broken by revolution. One of the best narrative histories of our time.

One Hundred Years of Socialism by Donald Sassoon (HarperCollins, £14.99) This dour book ends up trapped by its sense of the inevitable. What happened to socialism - its metamorphosis into market-oriented social democracy - was always going to happen. Sassoon is an essential source on the facts of organisation and economics, though less good on the passions.

Empire by Dennis Judd (Abacus, £9.99) Weak on the story of rivalry with France and protection of merchants in India, this is at its best in its memorable vignettes of the High Victorian and Edwardian empire, and in its account of the decline of the indefensible. As one-volume histories of huge subjects go, it is competent and readable.

Freedom at Midnight by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre (HarperCollins, £8.99) All accounts of the Raj's end are partisan. This is the best pro-Mountbatten book, and makes its case with skill. Fair-minded to all participants (without demonising Jinnah), it views the massacres of Partition as unforeseeable. This begs a few questions in an otherwise solid narrative.

God's Chinese Son by Jonathan Spence (HarperCollins, £7.99) Chinese obsessions with unitary rule have their background. Hong Xiuquan, whose conversion to Christianity convinced him that he was Christ's younger brother, led a rebellion that nearly toppled the empire, helped European victory in the Opium Wars and killed 20 million. Spence's account is sparky and scholarly. Roz Kaveney

Gay activism used to be about civil liberties; now, argues Roger Clarke, conspicuous consumption rules

Shop till you drop

In November 1970, 150 inheritors of the mantle of Oscar Wilde demonstrated in Highbury Fields in north London: it was the original Gay Pride march. Today's version of that modest event couldn't be further from the original demonstration with its small group of idealists, misfits and friends who believed in basic civil liberties for all. Is the current celebration of consumerism, gay orthodoxy and body fascism what those pioneers thought they were fighting for?

The Highbury Fields march is described towards the end of Hugh David's *On Queer Street: A Social History of British Homosexuality 1895-1995* (HarperCollins, £20). David, the controversial biographer of Stephen Spender, has produced a fluent, occasionally acid account of the modern gay psyche, from the trial of "egregious" Oscar Wilde onwards. From the tweedy Whitmanesque self-help ideas of Edward Carpenter through to the snooty Homintern of Oxford in the Thirties, sex in the wartime blackouts, the Montagu and Burgess scandals of the Fifties, the Wolfenden report of the Sixties, hedonism and Aids in the Seventies and Eighties, much of this ground is quite frankly, all too familiar in gay histories.

David brings all kinds of personal ambiguities to his subject. He has no doubt about what a tragedy the Wilde trial turned out to be – but more for the lot of gay men generally than for the fortunes of the lily-wielding aesthete himself. At the outset of the Wilde trial, 600 gay men boarded the train for France. The game was up, whatever the outcome. David is refreshingly sceptical of Wilde's



Harnessed to the cause: strapping lads and lasses on a Gay Pride float during the 1995 rally

PHOTOGRAPH: STEVE EAST

posthumous charm, referring to his affair with Alfred Douglas as a "most lamentable friendship". David is best about Christopher and his kind: the Auden, Spender, Acton generation. Unfortunately he's quite at sea with the contemporary scene and what makes it tick. He winces at gayness as a "bolt-on fashion accessory", and at gayness exemplified in the "typographical anarchy of lifestyle magazines".

We've already discovered that David is opinionated (he describes Lord Boothby's involvement with the Krays as "little short of pathetic"), so it's no surprise to find him being waspish about gay club-culture. He gamely tries to sound like a Jon Savage or a Michael Bracewell ("Frankie Goes to Hollywood had a number one hit with their notorious single 'Relax' in 1984, but it was becoming increasingly difficult to do so") in trying to get his head round what gay people have become after the past 100 years of suffering, but the ghostliness of the truth is just too much for him. As Quentin Crisp wrote of another situation, peace has broken out – and it's not a pretty sight. Furthermore

– and this is tellingly quoted at the end of the book – Crisp wryly observed that there is "no great dark man". The great dark man who represents truly emancipated and unfettered gay identity may not exist, but the fault these days lies increasingly at the feet of gay men themselves.

Alongside the shallow consumerism central to much of gay culture, the American groves of academe have pioneered a new moral orthodoxy – of exactly the kind routinely attacked by Camille Paglia. Gay Studies are thriving in the States. The *Gay and Lesbian Literary Heritage* edited by Claude J Summers (Bloomsbury, £17.99) is a good example of how, in their effort to make the subject bigger, many insignificant talents are given canonical status. Another is 47 Gay Men and Women who Enriched the World by Tom Cowan (Turnaround, £8.99). I looked up Colette's contemporary, Janet Flanner, listed among the 47, and found a rare example of a more balanced view: Flanner is recorded considering herself as "minor". As it stands, the book is absurdly Americocentric. Without a trace of irony, it lists the likes of Hor-

atio Alger Jr and May Sarton alongside Alexander the Great and Michelangelo.

Other orthodoxies are only too obvious in *The Gay and Lesbian Literary Heritage*. Elena Dyke-womon (sic) jostles with Larry Kramer and long entries on Native North American Literature. Eccentricities include the presence of James I but not Dennis Cooper. Matthew Stadler or Camille Paglia, even though Cooper gets six mentions in the book. Allen Ginsberg gets a predictably short entry (as academics hate him), about the same length as the treatment of our very own Patrick Gale. Among the insipid PhD students who are deciding on the gay canon even as we speak, Gale's fictions seem better appreciated than the snuff chic of Cooper's "New Narrative Movement".

The Polish composer Karol Szymanowski wrote a single gay novel, *Ephesos*, in 1918, which might have elevated him to the gay literary elect had the manuscript not been destroyed in the Second World War. This is one of many bizarre facts included in the wonderfully out-to-lunch *Encyclopaedia of Queer Myth, Symbol and Spirit*, edited

by Randy P Connor (Cassell, £25). It includes everything from Mesopotamian demons to *The Wizard of Oz* ("the authors of this encyclopaedia have been told that some 'butch dykes' feel kinship with the Munchkin lads").

Another orthodoxy? In the foreword, the editors note that they were put under pressure to leave out "material referring to sadomasochistic and intergenerational love" but, to their credit, they resisted the inevitable political correctness of American gay culture in their lists of vampires, witches and Polynesian sprites. However, this is no *gay Golden Bough*. There is no uniform theory and the source material of many of the wilder assertions is frequently unlisted. But at least, for all the pussyfooting around the labels "gay", "homosexual", "lesbian", "transgendered" and so on, there is some glimmer of a realisation that any orthodoxy involves enslavement. Whether it is in creating a hierarchy of gay gods or a canon of gay books, the effects are the same. As Oscar Wilde almost said, if there's one thing worse than not being talked about, it's being told what to think.

Irish airs in a minor key

Patricia Craig hears delicate harmonies in Ulster

Along with its other troubles, contemporary Ireland has had to contend with a powerful upsurge of generational friction, as the scope expands for old-fashioned parents and modern offspring to get at one another's throats. A set-up along these lines has begun to loom quite large in Irish fiction, and it's often centred on a fraught homecoming. Some – usually a daughter – is returning to her birthplace with more or less devastating news for parents who lack the resources to liberalise themselves.

John McGahern, Deirdre Madden and Anne Devlin are among authors who have explored this theme. Now it's the turn of Bernard MacLaverty, whose new novel – his first since *Cal*, 14 years ago – takes a young woman composer in a state of post-natal doldrums, accompanies her home to a town in mid-Ulster for her father's funeral, and branches out to orchestrate such issues as feminism, artistic creativity and the possibilities for reconciliation.

Catherine McKenna is the only child of a Catholic publican and occasional bumbling drunkard in a Co Derry town such as Maghera or Moneymore, or some other place where a metropolitan progressiveness has never taken hold. She is something of a musical prodigy. Her career moves steadily forward, via a

Grace Notes by Bernard MacLaverty. Cape, £14.99

music teacher at home, university in Belfast, a postgraduate year in Glasgow, a spell in Kiev, a teaching post on Islay, an important commission from the BBC.

Through it all, this outstanding composer shows a striking composure, though her personal circumstances – childbirth, estrangement from her family, disintegrating relations with the baby's drunken father – finally bring about the frayed nerves and lowness of spirit which colour the narrative. A despondent state, in fiction, is usually tied up with inner perceptions: things happen in the mind, while the impact of actual goings-on is muffled. The drama is all internal.

In *Grace Notes*, in fact, the story-line is virtually abolished. This is a very subtle novel which gains its richness from sources far removed from plentiful activity. The musical dimension, if you want to read it that way, may stand for those emotions too intense to be articulated; but it also facilitates a range of implications and wordplay. It makes a space in which a lot of disparate things are arranged in harmony: hormones and homophones, a pain and piano-playing, Islay and atrocities. And it turns the Orange Lambeg

Drum, shorn of its militancy and triumphalism, into an emblem of integration.

Bernard MacLaverty shows his usual relish for the lowly everyday detail, the squeaking laundry-basket (pace Katherine Mansfield), or the noise – the "chink" – a spoon makes against the side of a mug. Sometimes the close scrutiny, the peering annotations, seem to lead nowhere. He takes 12 pages, at one point, to describe a walk along a Scottish beach in the course of which nothing happens beyond the necessary placing of one foot in front of the other.

However, there is generally enough substance in the things that strike him, or his heroine, to cut out tedium. He is, at best, a delicate observer of familiar life – and eloquent in a minor key. *Grace Notes*, too, though it's far from being constructed in a comic spirit, contains the odd joke or two: "Another time in the pub she overheard Malcolm Black and a student arguing about Britain and Ireland being at loggerheads. She nose-dived into the argument, rolling up her political sleeves, only to find that they were talking about Benjamin Britten and the disagreements he had had with his composition teacher, John Ireland, at the Royal College of Music." It's a tiny caveat about impetuosity and conditioned responses.

Audiobooks



Economical, direct and jewelled with compelling ideas and striking imagery, John Banville's writing lends itself very well indeed to being read aloud. Simon Callow has the perfect voice for *The Untouchable*

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(HarperCollins, 3hrs, £8.99), and tellingly conveys the vanity, intellectual complexity and pathos of its Anthony Blunt-type anti-hero. Tim Pigott-Smith manages the huge cast of Bernard Cornwell's weirdly magical *The Winter King* (Penguin, 6hrs, £11.99) with fluent versatility and unflagging energy. Abridger Katy Nicholls has retained all the colour and character of this unusually angled retelling of the Arthurian legend, which is tightly focused in its history and topography. Excellent slipcase notes provide a useful map and a list of the characters, essential adjuncts for this complex but fascinatingly convincing account of the last struggle for civilisation before Britain's descent into the Dark Ages.

Christina Hardyment



Photographs of Héléne Cixous and her sisters, taken from her family albums

Weaving the web of words

Michèle Roberts learns to love a gnomic French guru

Rootprints: memory and life-writing by Héléne Cixous, Routledge, £12.99

Who is Héléne Cixous? She's perhaps best known to students of literature, who may be asked to decode her philosophical and poetic brand of criticism. Part of the generation that also produced Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva and others involved in the establishment of *écriture féminine* in France, Cixous has issued a stream of texts, many of which – such as *The Laugh of the Medusa* – have become classics. She's also written plays and novels, few of which are known here. Our view is skewed by the way she has been taken up in the universities rather than the bookshops.

On the evidence of this autobiographical volume, we need to see her as professor and intellectual, certainly, but also as dreamer, political activist, child, mother, colleague, poet, scribbler in notebooks, family chronicler and memoirist. Cixous demonstrates her thesis that there is no simple, single "I": there's that everyday self who signs cheques and income-tax forms, and then there are all the others. Faced with this plenitude of selves, Cixous doesn't offer us a conventional autobiography.

This collection of pieces includes lengthy interviews between Cixous and her colleague Mireille Calle-Gruber, *homages from such fashionable luminaries* as Jacques Derrida, an illustrated essay on family history, an enormous bibliography, copious notes and an afterword by the translator.

It has to be said that many of Cixous' texts defy the reader to find her an easy writer. She speaks an arcane version of the language of theory, a post-Freudian dialect rich in puns and free associations. Faced with one of her baffling word-webs, you can feel tempted to snort with scorn and despair, throw the book across the room, and rush out for a quick fix of a more emollient author. I think you have to give Cixous' prose plenty of time; then it detonates

in your brain. Also, it really helps to imagine the woman speaking to you. I remember once sharing an art history platform with Cixous: her text on a painting by Rembrandt, which she had circulated in advance, seemed incomprehensible. Yet the moment she began talking, her words on paper sprang to life. She does put the body back into writing; no mean feat, given that it's a messy, chaotic, desiring body.

If you just dip into this book, you do fetch up against some pretty bizarre items. We Brits may not approve of literary conversations that prove how subtly brilliant we are. On the other hand, we French don't assume that "intellectual" is an insult. If you learn philosophy as part of your GCSEs, then you're less fazed by a woman who wants to deconstruct everything you hold dear: the fixed implications of femininity and masculinity, for a start.

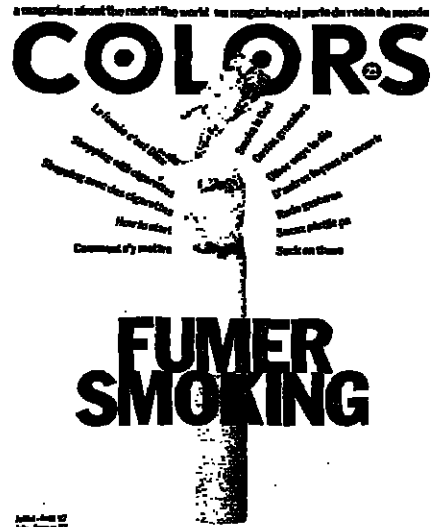
Cixous is like Virginia Woolf: seeing that fin passing by in the distant outer depths, she wants to haul in her net. It's never easy to translate the cries, grunts and pictures of that deep-sea world; at least she tries. Perhaps this makes her a writer's writer; I'd hope this meant she was a reader's writer, too. If you persevere, she gives you a shattering sense of how, under conventional language, there rages something else altogether, which we too could discover if we cherished doubt and uncertainty.

The most accessible and beautiful piece in the volume is Cixous' meditation on her own past, via memories and photographs in her family album. How moving to see the snaps of her Jewish ancestors, so soon to be obliterated, and to hear her recite their names, remember their gestures. The book is well worth buying for this lovely memoir alone, written as a narrative of grace, questioning and loss.

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Iran unveiled

Amid mad mullahs and menacing murals, Caspar Henderson discovers a culture caught between worlds

From wrap to rap: with half the population under 20, Tehran's youth are slowly turning their backs on ideology - which bans even holding hands - and looking for a place to party. Ancient and modern collide, left, at the Platz Azadi

**PHOTOGRAPH:
PATRICK BARTH/
BILDERBURG &
MIKE GOLDWATER -
NETWORK**

A small girl sat on top of a folded carpet in a wheelbarrow. She was being pushed by her father, who was trying to negotiate 10 lanes of traffic crammed into a space for six. The oncoming cars showed no signs of slowing until the last possible moment, when they screeched to an angry halt. Rage frequently seems to simmer in downtown Tehran, the capital of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

It is the 18th year of the Islamic revolution. And although as a traveller you are often told the revolution is crumbling from within, its outward symbols are as prominent as ever. Women must, without exception, hide their hair and every curve of their bodies in garments known as *hejab*, and many cover themselves completely in *chador*. The garments have to be black or a neutral colour, and a group of women walking down

the street tends to look like a flock of weird crows.

Tehran is full of ardent murals 100ft high and more, extolling revolutionary virtues. High up on billboards, white-bearded mullahs gaze sternly but beneficently, like Father Christmas's serious older brothers. A handsome young soldier, mortally wounded in the war with Iraq, smells a rose 3ft wide, held by an angelic child. Behind them visions of the garden of paradise – an ecological impossibility given the city's air pollution – blossom across the wall of high-rises.

These uncompromising façades of revolutionary zeal hide a very different story. Like Tehran's underground railway, which is forever under construction and never seems to get any nearer completion, the revolution is a rickety compromise with an uncertain future. A visit to Ayatollah Khomeini's mausoleum is

perhaps the most poignant place to see this. It is one of the biggest construction sites in the modern Middle East, and it looks like a combination of Disney's magic castle and Terminal Four at Heathrow. Open 24 hours a day, it is intended as a place of pilgrimage for people the world over, but especially for the *mostazafan*, Iran's oppressed masses who were his most ardent supporters, and who supplied a frenzied crowd of more than 2 million at his funeral.

One of the most potent myths of the revolution is splendid isolation and independence. Iranians have a well-developed sense of grievance about foreign interference, and with good reason: for the past 300 years Iran has been as a pawn in the games of other nations. But the revolution in 1978 and the terrible war with Saddam Hussein's Iraq from 1980 to 1988 marked a com-

ing of age. It is thought that 1 million Iranians, many of them young volunteers, were killed in the conflict. But, despite some terrific blunders, the country held its ground without any foreign help. By contrast, Saddam, an enthusiastic gasser of women and children, enjoyed

extensive support from the Soviet Union and all the major Western powers including the US, which provided him with crucial air surveillance technology. There's no doubting the magnitude of Iran's achievement in saving him off.

Continued next page

Tehran trails

Getting there
British Airways (0345 222111) and Iran Air (0171-409 0971) fly three times weekly between Heathrow and Tehran. The lowest official fare on BA is £1,058.50. A discount ticket on Aeroflot via Moscow from IMS Travel (0171-224 4678) costs £425.50.

Few tour operators specialise in Iran. Jasmin Tours (01628 531121) has a programme of group tours; the company can also make arrangements for individual travellers.

Red tape
Contact the Visa Section of the Consular Department of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, at 50 Kensington Court, London W8 5DD (0171-795 4922, 2-4pm).

Women travellers
All parts of the body, except for the hands, feet and face, must be covered when in public, and outer clothing should be loose-fitting.


Accommodation
The Howeyzeh Hotel (see page 10) on the corner of Nejatollah and Taleghani Avenue (00 98 21 894 817) is one of the few remaining good-value hotels in Tehran.

The most recently published guidebook to cover Iran is Lonely Planet's *Middle East* (£13.99).

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TALES OF TEHRAN

Ali Baba grows up

Beyond the old bazaars is a city that is quietly changing. By Mark Rowe

Those nostalgic for Soviet-style propaganda will love Tehran. An afternoon is well spent taking a taxi tour of the anti-Western and pro-Khomeini murals that bedeck the vast tower blocks around the city. My favourite is on Karim Kahn-e Zand Street, where the US flag has been painted on to the facade of a 12-storey block, with skulls replacing the stars and the stripes depicted as falling missiles. Afterwards, you can relax in the coffee bar of the five-star Laleh International Hotel and gaze at the "Down with the USA" slogan embossed in silver letters, as if they have been machine-gunned there, on the wall above the filter-coffee machine.

The authorities are still sensitive around the former US Embassy, stormed in 1979. Take a discreet stroll or direct a taxi to drive by what is now labelled the "US Espionage Den" to see the Iranian students' warning daubed on walls: "We will make America face a severe defeat."

Nearby is the Howeyzeh Hotel, which is among the few remaining good-value hotels in the city, since the government introduced a two-tier, dollar-oriented system of charging for foreigners. The hotel costs foreigners \$51 a night (much more than for Iranians) but is worth most of its four stars and is a good place to pass quiet nights talking with the

friendly staff, who wistfully recall visits to England "before the revolution". In the heart of Tehran lies the bazaar, conjuring up visions of the tales of Ali Baba and giving you the sense of being at the city's core. Crooked alleyways lead to shops selling a dazzling array of gold-, silver- and ironwork; paths criss-cross, tea houses are numerous and snug; all is mixed with a smell of incense, sweat and butter oil from brass lamps.

If this intensely Middle Eastern experience creates the need to return to the surface for air, head for the northern suburbs.

Traditional accounts of visits to Tehran include tales of illicit alcohol consumption in the far-flung, better-off suburbs. Unfortunately, I must report that the closest I came to alcohol was the Howeyzeh Hotel, where you can buy cans of something revolting called "malt".

But northern Tehran is the place to see a defiantly colourful interpretation of the Islamic dress code. Most women in Tehran wear the *chador*, the all-enveloping black cloak. But in the shopping arcades of Vali-e-Asr they wear multicoloured scarves and loose-fitting long coats, and their hair, sometimes dyed, hangs visibly over their eyes. They wear conspicuous ponytails, and some sport baseball caps and jeans underneath their cloaks. Even in Tehran, the times are a-changing.

Iran unveiled

From previous page But that was then. Now, Iran is a young country. Half the population is under 20. They don't remember the supposedly evil times of the Shah, and even the war against Iraq seems like ancient history. An average salary is now less than £100 a month, no more than a quarter of what a family needs in Tehran. The gap between the rich and the poor – one of the main causes of the revolution against the Shah – is painfully obvious, and shows every sign of growing. So it's hardly surprising that many young Iranians are turning their backs on ideology and are looking for a place to party. Sometimes it seems they've already found it, right under the nose of authority. Beside a high-rise block of flats displaying a giant portrait of Ayatollah Khomeini I came across a funfair in full swing. Young girls, dressed in full black garb, were whizzing around at high speed on a whirling, whooping with delight.

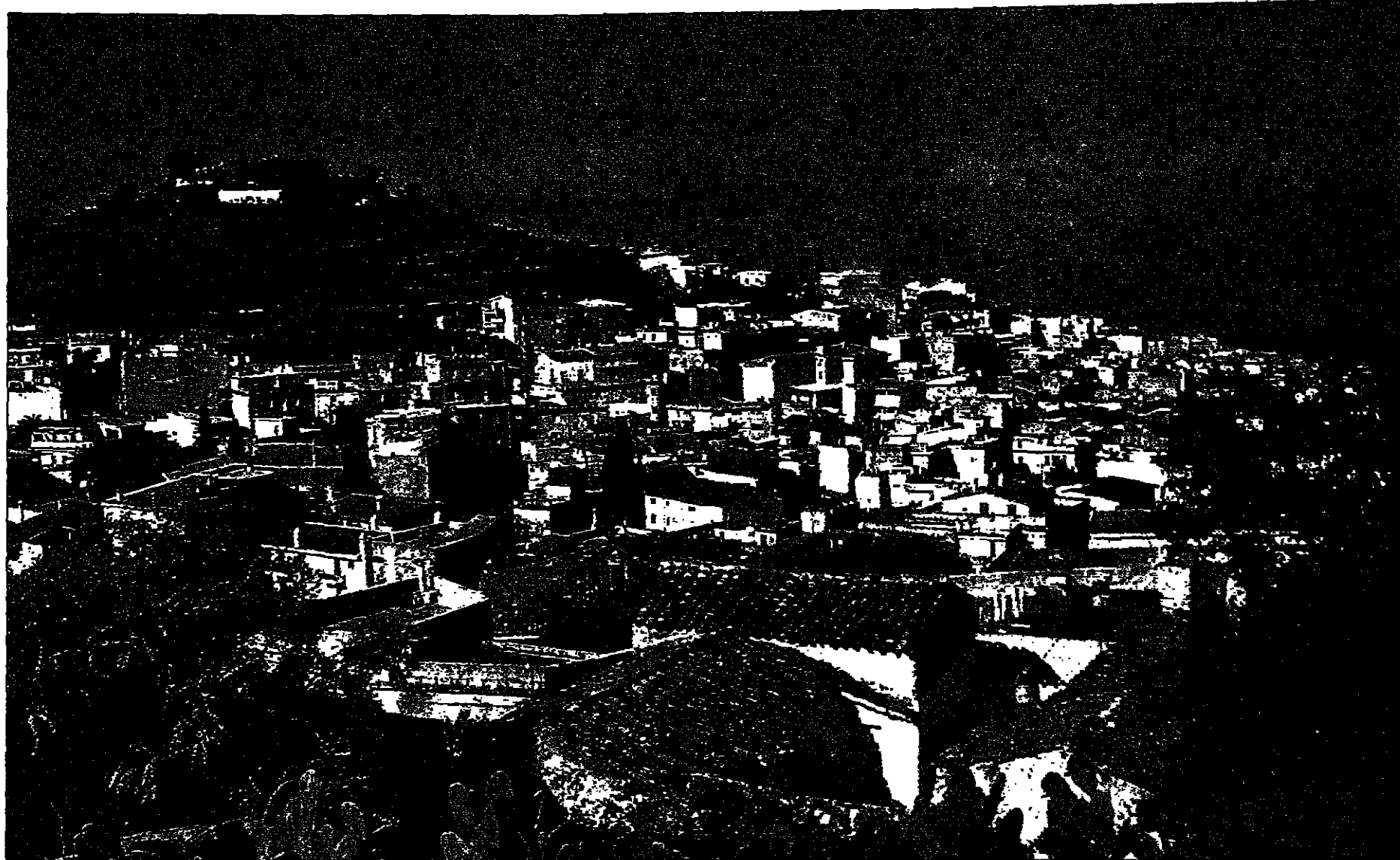
The big issue for young people everywhere – how boy meets girl – is made doubly difficult in Iran by rigorous separation of the sexes in public. Even tiny signals can be dangerous in the wrong circumstances, as I found myself when I casually removed a jacket on entering a shopping mall, revealing bare arms. Within

a few seconds two heavily bearded gentlemen appeared from nowhere and told me in no uncertain terms to put my jacket on again. My friends said later that we were lucky not to have been hauled into the police station.

If you're caught just holding hands with someone who is not a brother or sister you can end up spending a rough night in jail. Some young men in their last year of high school told me they would get hold of the rota of the local police station so they'd know when it was safe to meet girls in the parks.

There are few places where young people can talk frankly in public. Among them are the city's handful of Armenian coffee houses. At one of these I joined some students – engineers, mathematicians, medics. Our table was attended by ancient waiters, dressed in the elegant uniforms of a more liberal time, who served us excellent coffee – a rarity in Iran. Conversation sparked over famous poets of the past and musicians of today. But when I asked how they felt about the future, my friends smiled sadly, and talk trailed off into silence.

Yet for all their uncertainty they remained open-minded and hospitable. And it was this warmth and welcome that made Tehran such a rewarding place to visit.



Mediterranean medley

Colin Hughes took his brood to Sardinia's Forte Village – for a mix of family fun and romantic reverie

The moment you decide a Mediterranean holiday has all been worth it comes when you stroll out on the beach after dark, gaze up at the stars, soak up the sound of surf lightly breaking on moonlit sands, and drape your arm around the shoulders of a loved one, ostensibly protecting her against that little edge of cool that's fallen after a long and lazy day in the summer heat.

I enjoyed just this experience after only four days at the Forte Village in Sardinia, an island blessed with some of the most beautiful beaches imaginable. Instead of sharing the moment with my wife, though, I shared it with one little daughter aged three, gambolling off into the Milky Way, did those lights come from ships and could he take his sandals off 'cos they were full of sand?

And thereby hangs a large part of the tale – because two good reasons for being at the Forte Village are the sensational and very long private beach, and the courteous and helpful welcome given to children. But since the place has so much to offer, you could rope together a whole raft of other reasons which fully justify being there without mentioning those two.

My wife, for example (who on that romantically moonlit night had retreated to our bedroom to settle the sixth and littlest member of our party, aged 10 months), would probably not have picked the welcome for children, or the beach, or the 17 tennis courts, full-sized artificial football pitch, or even the little enclosure for flamingoes and pelicans; most likely, if she returned, it would be to spend as much time as possible escaping from maternal responsibilities and holing up in the resort's health spa.

As it was, she managed to escape for the odd couple of hours. Her first visit was for a mind-numbing massage which left her in a state of calm astonishment to behold in someone otherwise wholly responsible for tending two pre-school children. The second was to loll about in a variety of spa pools (they call it thalassotherapy). The experience appeared to have no effect on her health, but a great deal on her desire to drift off to sleep in seawater pools and daze in steamy Turkish baths.

For a place that presents itself as an exclusive retreat, the Forte Village clientele are surprisingly classless, and mixed in national origin. We encountered many Germans (indeed, one charming four-year-old named Maximilian fell in love with my littlest daughter). There were English of all walks, some French, a few glossy *non-cum-résumé* Russians and many Italians. Certainly the ability to afford it (or not to worry about the fact that you can't) is pretty essential: the accommodation costs are highish for the best rooms or bungalows, and many of the resort's additional services (such as sailing boats) are quite costly. But you get what you pay for, especially in quintessentially Italian civility of service, and excellent food.

At the Hotel Castello, where we stayed, it wasn't only the children who were bowled over by superb breakfast tables spilling with hams, fruit juices and cheeses. The variety of accommodation (three hotels, different kinds of bungalows) is matched by a range of restaurants that makes it unwise to remain on your home patch all week. Our best evening foray was for a meal of seafood at one of several beach-side restaurants, where the older kids ate their first large langoustines followed by a wonderful clam-strewn pasta and medley of fish dishes. After that, and half a bottle of dark red Sardinian wine, making it down to the beach for a star-gazing stroll is a bit of a struggle – even when the beach is only 20 yards away.

For the children, though, the greatest pleasure of the place was the freedom, space and safety, along with three large swimming pools, a serious diving pool, and a pair of pools exclusively for the Hotel Castello. The children swam in conditions they never believed possible – space and delightful quiet. The only time I saw anyone offended was when the resident instruc-

tor started blasting water aerobics music out over the central swimming pool just after an English couple had stretched themselves peacefully out on loungers. In the end, though, the hilarious spectacle of 20 people trying to do star jumps with half their body underwater was well worth the brief intrusion into our peace.

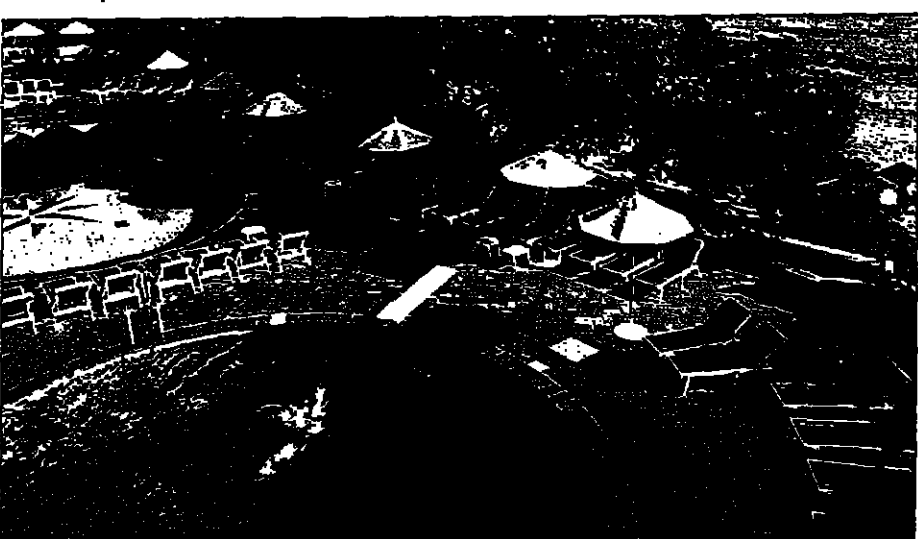
I would have loved to huddle about the bay on a Hobie catamaran, or a little Laser dinghy, but mostly the winds were high, and I became more preoccupied with organising tennis games and coaching sessions.

And with all that going on, was there ever any reason to leave the resort? Not a lot, if you're there for a week. But it is a kind of madness to miss seeing the surrounding area of the south-eastern island – the superb coastal panoramas of maquis, rocky promontories capped with Roman castles, and steep tracks leading into the mountainous hinterland, with mimosa, wild olive and prickly pear bushes, like an African and southern European scene rolled together.

Africa is in fact only 100 miles from the nearby southern tip of Sardinia – half as far as the nearest point of the Italian mainland. You know it when the hot winds blow. You can feel it, too, if you escape down the coast to some of the southern peninsulas, where smooth dunes roll down the beaches and tiny beachfront clam shells crunch underfoot.

We ventured out in a Land Rover driven by an environmental student named Dario who gave us a fascinating account of real Sardinian life. But we didn't go to Sardinia for reality; we went for the green trees, bare rocks, the beach, the sun and, at the Forte Village, the comfort of having every need catered for with the utmost courtesy. One week was not enough.

Flights between the UK and Sardinia are scarce. Italy Sky Shuttle (0800 129 129) has charters from Gatwick and Stansted to Alghero and Olbia in the north of Sardinia, and to Cagliari in the south. The fare to Cagliari and Olbia is £260 return in July and August. Fares to Alghero are slightly cheaper. A week at the Forte Village Resort staying at the Hotel Castello starts from £90 per person per night on half board on a weekly basis. There is a 30 per cent reduction on accommodation for children aged two to 11 sharing with two adults, 90 per cent reduction for infants. Colin Hughes booked through Italian Escapades (0181-748 2661).



Soaking up Sardinia: appealing villages perch above the Mediterranean (top); the solitude of Forte Village (above)



Simon Calder

I had almost reached the head of the queue, when a stranger tapped me on the shoulder

No-frills airlines are 29 a penny these days, but none has yet been as bold as the much-missed PeopleExpress, which brought low fares to thousands of travellers to and within the United States in the early Eighties. This airline was a co-operative, a kind of John Lewis Partnership of the air, with some no-nonsense ideas about dispensing with frills. Boldest of all,

PeopleExpress sought to persuade all its customers to carry only hand luggage. Big, bulky luggage racks were installed in its Boeings, and passengers were invited to cram in as much as they wished. Anyone with the temerity to consign bags to the hold was charged a fee, reflecting the cost to the airline in time and money of handling luggage.

Now British Airways is going in exactly the opposite direction. When I arrived at Gatwick's North Terminal for a flight to Vienna, it was clear that the summer crush at Britain's airports had already begun: the queue to go through security stretched half-way to Crawley. I had almost reached the head of the queue when a stranger – not in airline uniform – tapped me on the shoulder.

"Excuse me, sir – could I see your boarding pass?" "I represent British Airways, and I'm making sure that people don't exceed their hand luggage allowance."

Starting this summer, BA has decided to implement its rules on hand luggage vigorously. Just so you're prepared when you feel that

rap on the shoulder, here's the drill.

This individual wants to see your boarding pass to find out a) if you are a BA passenger, and b) if so, what class you are travelling in. The last piece of information is necessary because not all passengers are equal. Economy passengers are entitled to 6kg, while business-class passengers qualify for half as much again. If the security man suspects your bag weighs too much for the class you are in, he will take it, and you, out of the queue and lead you to a large set of scales, on to which your bag is plunked. If it tips over the limit you will be instructed to return to the check-in desk to consign it to the tender care of the baggage handlers.

Eventually you make it back to the security queue, which has grown even longer since you were unceremoniously expelled from it half-an-hour earlier. You spot the man whom you hold responsible for the 30 minutes of palaver, and ask if you really have to join the queue again.

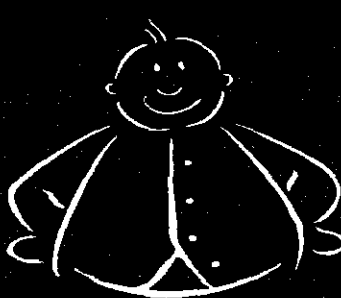
"Of course I don't have a trolley-wheel to stand on in complaining. The airline says: 'We are sure that the simple policy on cabin baggage will be a measure you welcome – particularly as it will improve the level of

security we provide and reduce the amount of stress you experience during your journey. Putting a limit on the size and weight of baggage in the cabin has two major benefits. Exits are less likely to be blocked in the event of an emergency, and there is less risk of injury if a bag should fall from an overhead locker."

The higher weight limit for business-class passengers appears to imply that people who buy expensive tickets have stronger heads than economy travellers. And what about the touchy subject of duty-free? Any rule-abiding traveller who strays into the duty-free shops is likely to tip over the limit. I could wander off and buy 50 litres of beer before turning up at the gate.

Hand baggage, and rules pertaining to it, aren't worth getting steamed up about. But the new measures could cost BA a lot. Planes will be delayed because passengers will be held up by having to queue unmention times. Some of the extra checked-in luggage will inevitably be misdirected, causing grief for passengers and expense for the airline. And people who find the whole performance undignified will be tempted to travel on airlines that do not step up the anxiety index in this way. But I could be wrong; after all, British Airways is still in business while PeopleExpress is not.

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سكرا من الاميل

The temple of gloom

It takes an Indiana Jones to bypass the hordes heading into London's Holy Grail—Westminster Abbey. By Jane Farnival

It is the ultimate club for celebrity corpses, from Edward the Confessor to Dylan Thomas. Two-and-a-half million people each year shuffle round to see the tombs of crowned heads. Or the headless, in the case of the attraction, Mary Queen of Scots, rebuffed next to her arch-enemy, Elizabeth I, by her son James, in a funerary equivalent of a two-fingered salute.

You enter the tomb. It is meant to be a quiet area but is swarming with visitors. To the left of the nave is the entrance to the Royal Chapel. It is here that you must pay if you want to proceed. In the nave you will find the tombs of Edward the Confessor, two Henrys, two Edwards, a Richard, the Princes in the Tower, etc. But once through, it is as if you have stumbled upon a monumental ivyble sale.

Westminster Abbey should be one of our best run tourist attractions, but there seems little freedom for the visitor, and to see anything worth the journey there you have to pay.

Even in the places you have paid to enter, a pompous verger reminds tourists to "keep moving". When one of the monuments does catch your eye, you cannot backtrack – it is a one-way route. And there are constant reminders, wherever you are in the abbey, that they "kindly receive donations".

Some of the most dignified monuments are covered by what look like body-bags. As you enter, the monuments to national heroes are hidden by stacks of chairs, as if it were a parish hall, and throughout the abbey tombs are roped off with the message "Please do not touch".

I have never seen so many "N" signs: No photography (postcards cost at least 25p). No video-cameras. No stamps sold here. No touching. No entry. No credit cards at this till. It is almost un-Christian.

I saw two old dears giving up their search around the abbey and diving for the door marked "Refreshments". Instead of a teashop, they found one makeshift trolley in a pigeon-plagued cloister, selling "Coffees of the world" for £1 a cup.



Westminster Abbey: visitors who come to get closer to God may end up praying to get out

PHOTOGRAPH: BRIAN HARRIS

There are no tables or chairs. You may find a stone windowsill to squat on.

And a stone windosill to squat on.

On to Poets' Corner. This is stuffed with men, with only two small memorials to women (George Eliot and Jane Austen). I can't hold that against the abbey today – but it can help the fact that many of our "resting" theatrical luvvies are fenced off as in a building site. I couldn't see Noël Coward or Sybil Thormdike. It shouldn't be like this. It would take only a few days to rethink the abbey's signs, organise guidebooks, and send visitors away closer to God rather than prying to get out.

One factor that is sure to spoil your visit is a severe overcrowding problem. Emma St John-Smith, Westminster Abbey's press officer, admits: "We have got to do something radical to recover the calm." She

says that visitor figures are going up: official estimates put the annual number at 2.6 million, which is regarded as more than the abbey can handle. "We're ruling nothing out and nothing in," she says. Are there any plans to provide a café? "We have a small coffee stand in the cloister and another outside the gate, and we're not intending to expand."

There are plans to make visitors pay for entry to the whole abbey, rather than just the Royal Chapel. "The charges aren't to make money, but to limit the number of visitors." But Ms St John-Smith insists that "genuine" worshippers and ex-service personnel wishing to view the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, as opposed to the hordes of tourists (how will they distinguish the two groups?), will still be admitted free. We shall see.

Pit stop

After all that, you need to hike, bus or cab it north to Leicester Square and cool down at WC2 Hängen-Dass on the Square (W1P 3P7 957T). Don't be discouraged by the long queue in front of the shop at weekends; it is probably for the take-away counter. For those wanting to eat from the à la carte menu, tables are available in the attractive, bright and lofty-ceilinged restaurant, which has a distinctly Continental ambience. The ice-creams are, of course, the main attraction, in one-, two- or three-scoop portions (£1.30/£2.20/£2.95) with all sorts of toppings, or in splits and sundaes (£3.95). The patisserie items, however, are not in the same class as the ice-creams. Three high-chairs are provided. Small portions are available for little ones, and a children's menu is a possibility this year. No smoking. Seats to open 10am-midnight (Fri and Sat to 1am).

from Earl Roney's Guide '... And Children Come Too' (Bookman, \$9.90)

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Winchester Cathedral (01962 855137). Open all week, 9.30am to 6.30pm. Admission: no fee, but voluntary contributions are gratefully received. Attractions: Winchester Bible, burial site of Jane Austen. The cathedral is currently running workshops for primary school children.

Canterbury Cathedral (01227 762862). Open all week. 9am to 5pm. Sundays 12.30pm to 2.30pm and 4.30pm to 5.30pm. Admission: £2.50 adults, £1.50 students, seniors and children. Attractions: book and gift shops, refreshments, acoustic and guided tours. Tombs of Black Prince and Henry IV. and stained glass collection.

Chester Cathedral (01244 324756). Open all week, 7.30am to 6.30pm. Admission: a donation of £2 a visitor is requested. Attractions: gift shop, refectory; organ recitals at lunchtime on Thursdays are open to the public.

Salisbury Cathedral (01722 323279). Open daily. May to August. 8am to 8.15pm. Admission: £2.50 adults, £1.50 seniors and students, 50p children. £5 family groups. Attractions: tours of tower, £2 a person; free tours of cathedral. Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, tours of west front, £2 adults, £1 children over 11. Shop, refectory, brass-reading and name-search. Chapter house (Magna Carta) 30p a person, children free if accompanied.

Guildford Cathedral (01483 5652870). Open all week, 9.30am to 5pm. Admission: a donation of £2 a visitor is suggested. Attractions: cathedral book shop, gift shop and refectory; a new cathedral, fine example of a modern place of worship.

Glastonbury Abbey (01458 832267). Open every day, 9am to 6pm. Admission: £2.50 adults, £2 seniors, students and children between five and 15 years old, family ticket £5.50. Groups of 10 people or more: £2 adults, 80p children. Attractions: ruined abbey, gift shop, café and modern museum.

York Cathedral (01904 634426). Open every day. 7am to 6pm. Admission: free, but donations of £2 a head are requested from large groups. Attractions: restaurant, café and shop. Every Saturday from 19 July until 20 September, organ recital at 6.30pm, cost £4. Views from central tower amazing, carvings in chapter house, treasury, large collection of stained glass.

St David's Cathedral, Wales (01437 720392). Open all week, 8am to 6pm. Admission: free, but all contributions gratefully received. Attractions: simple refreshments, two gift shops. Concerts at 8.15pm every Tuesday, tombs of Edmund Tudor and Bishop Henry Gower.

St Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh (0131-2259442). Open 9am to 7pm weekdays, 9am to 5pm Saturdays, 1pm to 5pm Sundays. Admission: free, but a donation of £1 a visitor is suggested. Attractions: refreshments, gift shop, 900 years' worth of history.

King's College Chapel, Aberdeen (01224 272137). Open all week, 9am to 5pm, student guides 2pm to 5pm Sundays. Admission: free. Attractions: refreshments, gift shop, tomb of Bishop Elphinstone.

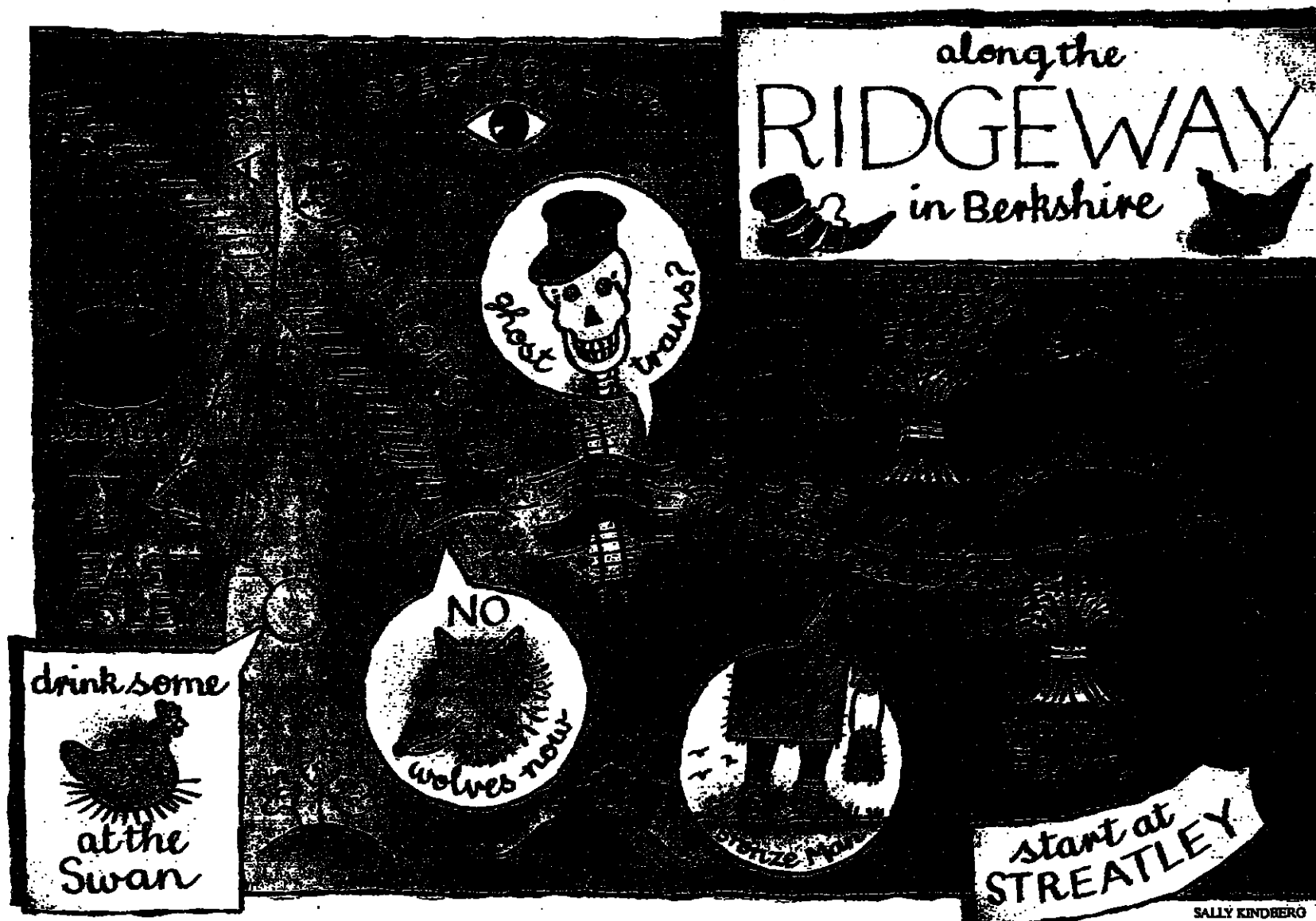
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Into the Berkshire wilderness

Matthew Brace walks along the Ridgeway ... straight into a row over the ancient track's future



One of the most rewarding stretches of the Ridgeway is the 10-mile hike from Streatley, on the Berkshire bank of the Thames, west to the pretty village of East Isley up on the Downs. First locate the Bull Inn at Streatley and head north along an A-road for a few hundred yards. At a fork, follow the A417 to Wantage and after 800 yards branch off left on a side road which, after some houses and a farm, turns into a rough, tree-lined, chalk track – unmistakably the Ridgeway.

In a natural break in the trees 300 yards up the rough path, I looked down on a perfect English farming scene – a field of crops swaying in the breeze, a small clump of beech trees isolated in its centre and, in an adjacent field, a tractor making its way up the slope, followed by a bushy-tailed dog. As you follow the path past two Warren Farms and

rise towards the top of the Downs, the trees that line the Ridgeway give way to shorter, stouter hedgerows, at least 400 years old by a rough calculation of counting the number of tree and shrub species – elder, hawthorn, cherry, and more.

Out on the open downland you get a sense of wilderness. For miles in all directions the Downs reveal only the occasional farm. Between fields stained red with poppies, a sun-bleached chalk scar marks your route.

This being famous horse-training country, you will find yourself walking alongside gallops, especially on Blewbury Down; if you are lucky you may see a posse of riders putting their horses through their paces, thundering across the soft grass overlying the chalk.

Follow the excellent Ridgeway signs and you will reach the roaring A34. The

path takes you under the road and on to slightly more boggy ground where, after 100 yards, you will see a footpath sign beckoning you south off the Ridgeway and across Hodcott Down. Take it and pass a huge warren where, if you approach with stealth, you can see scores of rabbits playing.

When you reach a side road, turn left and walk into East Isley (up a steep hill) and enjoy a well-deserved pint of Old Speckled Hen at the Swan Inn in the centre of the village, where the landlord, Michael Connolly, will tell you about the ancient sheep fairs that used to take place in the main street. There were once 20 inns catering for the sheep traders, but now there are just three. Black-and-white photographs on the wall of the Swan's bar record the bustle of sheep-fair days long gone.

To get back to Streatley, take the

good Ridgeway Explorer bus service, which runs on Sundays and Bank Holidays until late October. (It is harder to bus it on weekdays and Saturdays and it might be better to ask a willing driver in your party to fetch you.) There is a stop in East Isley and another in Streatley, so you can leave your car in Streatley and get dropped back there later (80p to £3 for adults; children and OAPs half price). The last bus east from East Isley is at 7.26pm and gets to Streatley at 7.44pm.

For a full Ridgeway Explorer timetable and details about all public transport and other information about the Ridgeway Path, contact The National Trails Officer at: The National Trails Office, Countryside Service, Dept of Leisure and Arts, Holton, Oxford OX3 1QQ (01865 810224).

Directions

- Start from Bull Inn at Streatley, head north on the A-road. Branch off on A417 to Wantage and then left on to side road, signposted "Ridgeway" with an acorn.
- Road becomes track and leads up on to the Downs – follow Ridgeway signs. Cross old railway bridge. Trace the edge of a gallop up a rise to a paved road, turn right and continue for two miles to the A34.
- Walk on 100 yards and take footpath left (south) off the Ridgeway across Hodcott Down to a side road. Turn left and walk into East Isley.

You will need

Suncream and hat (chalk reflects the sun). Water (none on route) and lunch. Stout boots (the track can be rough). OS Landranger map 174, Newbury and Wantage (£4.95).

For an ancient path, the Ridgeway is having to deal with some very modern disputes. It is one of Britain's 12 national trails, stretching almost 90 miles from Ivinghoe Beacon near the Hertfordshire-Buckinghamshire border to Avebury in Wiltshire. It runs through some of southern England's most ravishing country – crossing downs, and passing chalk horses and Bronze Age camps where wolves once roamed. In midsummer week, when I walked the path, it was peaceful. I saw 30 walkers, 20 dogs, six mountain-bikers and one motorcyclist.

But in a recent survey of 1,300 Ridgeway users, co-ordinated by the National Trail Office, complaints about four-wheel drive vehicles were vociferous. A third of all users (of which almost 60 per cent are walkers) cited recreational vehicles as spoiling their enjoyment through noise, speed, dust and inconsiderate, dangerous or aggressive behaviour.

One group that participated in the survey, Friends of the Ridgeway, would prefer to see no recreational four-wheel drives (excluding farm vehicles) on the track, claiming they damage the path and that their very presence in an untamed place is obtrusive.

They have a point. Even the scrambling motorbike that passed me high up on the Lambourn Downs destroyed the peace, scattering the butterflies, silencing the birds and leaving a trail of blue fumes. But the Friends are up against an old law that shows much of the route between Streatley and Avebury has been used for many years by vehicles of one sort or another and so allows vehicles on them today.

The motoring organisations' Land Access and Recreational Association has drawn up a code of conduct for Ridgeway users which requests them to stick to the defined track, to travel quietly and unobtrusively, alone or in small groups, and to respect the countryside and be courteous. And on occasions of severe weather softening the track, signs are posted requesting drivers to use restraint to protect the surface.

The national trails officer in charge of the Ridgeway, Jos Joslin, says the dispute is well-known and looks like rumbling on. "The conflict worries me, but what is most important is that everybody should be reasonable about it," she says. "It's not that drivers are evil and walkers are good."

The Ridgeway is having to face other modern dilemmas, too. The Friends' survey makes for disturbing reading, showing to what extent we have become spoilt by urban living and how our sense of adventure is becoming increasingly reliant on the modern world. One respondent even complained of "unpleasant cows".

When asked whether there were any services or facilities that could improve the quality of their visit, the overwhelming majority said yes. Only 3.5 per cent wanted the trail left as it is. Demands included better availability of water, toilets, litter bins and even refreshment stalls. Maybe this is a sign of the next step in the evolution of the walker – we will lose our ability to carry a water bottle and some chocolate bars, become unable to carry our own litter or even take a leak in the bushes. And with it, we will tame and ruin our last few patches of wilderness.

The land of the dragon is fired up – for hunting

Protesters from rural Wales are marching to London. Duff Hart-Davis finds a militant pace

Pace by pace, the countryside marchers are closing in on London for next Thursday's rally in Hyde Park, where thousands of supporters will stage a mass protest against government interference in rural affairs, and in particular against the threat to fox-hunting.

In all the columns – one from the north, one from the West Country, two from Wales – tremendous spirit has built up. But it is in the contingents from the Welsh mountains and valleys that anger is smouldering most dangerously. Their contempt for Michael Foster, the MP for Worcester, who is bringing in a Private Member's Bill to ban hunting with hounds, is not easy to describe.

When the first Welsh march left Machynlleth on 27 June, there occurred an unnerving incident.

One of the leaders, David Jones, had just been interviewed for television about what would happen if hunting were banned. He replied instantly that the first victim would be the red kite, recently reintroduced to central Wales at enormous expense. Farmers, he explained, would seek to protect their lambs by poisoning foxes with strychnine; the kites, being carrion-eaters, would pick up baits and be exterminated in short order.

A few minutes later the column headed out of town, over a cattle grid on to the common. Sud-

denly a single red kite appeared, out to the marchers' right. With the hair on their necks standing up, they watched the bird dive in at them and fly the length of the contingent, barely 30ft off, with its head turned sideways as it surveyed the 250 walkers. Then it lifted away like a fighter aircraft and was gone.

Never in his life had David Jones known anything like it. He describes that inexplicable visitation as the weirdest sight he has ever seen. However, when I joined the marchers at Kington in Herefordshire on Monday morning, it struck me that the kite's slightly sinister fly-past epitomised the undercurrent of menace in the advance on London.

On the surface, all was good humour and enthusiasm. Boisterous jokes ricocheted up and down the column; the walkers courteously made way for traffic and extended greetings to every onlooker they passed. Yet many of them were harbouring black thoughts in their hearts, for they bitterly resent being pressured by an urban majority who understand nothing of their way of life, and rumours of civil disobedience were on many lips.

"People try to accuse us of cruelty," said Richard Williams, who farms and hunts (on foot) around Snowdon, where he is master of the Eryri hounds. "They're very well-meaning people, I dare say. But what are they talking about? My family has farmed here for 400 years. If we'd been cruel to animals, we'd never have survived this long in our business."

The point made by many is that in mountains and conifer forests there is no viable alternative to hunting with hounds. Nobody knows this better than David Jones, a fine-looking man of 54 who has been kennel huntsman of the David Davies pack, based on Llandinam in central Wales, for 24 seasons.

Last season his hounds killed 156 foxes, many of them in response to emergency calls from farmers whose lambs were being taken. One man had lost 37 lambs, one woman 22; her neighbour had lost 12 in three nights.

When Mr Jones goes out on a lambing call, he arrives at break of dawn, while the dew is holding scent down. By then the fox and his kill may be two or three hours away, but because the hounds are "deep-scented", they can follow the drag of the night-line. "In the end they'll put him up – and you know for sure you've got the right one."

What vexes Mr Jones particularly is the fact that "none of these politicians has the slightest interest in the fox. He's thrived for all these years because of hunting. If they take hunting away, he'll virtually disappear." The scenario he paints is the same as that of Mr Williams: farmers will be out



Striking out: marchers feel they are defending their communities

PHOTOGRAPH: ROB STRATTON

with guns, snares and poison; victims will include kites, buzzards, badgers and stray dogs.

Wildlife apart, several marchers emphasised that hunting is one of the few remaining factors that knit rural communities together. "The hunt and the football club are the two things that keep the village going," said Hugh Thomas, who works in the dairy trade. With local schools and cottage hospitals closing, bus services run down and railways defunct, people cling fiercely to what they have left. It is a measure of the gulf between country and city that of 50-odd people from the village of Caersws who are going to Hyde Park by coach, 20 have never been to London.

"You want to know why I'm walking?" demanded one man aggressively. "My father fought a world war for freedom of choice. That's why."

At lunchtime on Monday we came through orchards and water-meadows to a 17th-century mill, half-timbered in black and white, which stood

beside the river Arrow at a point where the stream tumbled noisily over a weir. In this dream-like setting the owners had laid out a splendid spread for the 33 core marchers, with drinks and snacks for 100-odd hangers-on.

No scene could have been more idyllic. Yet under the peace I could still feel the tension of the men and women who have given up substantial amounts of time and money to walk to London, 20 and more miles a day, for what they believe in.

I dare say the marchers themselves will never resort to violence; but out in the hills to the west there are plenty of fiery devils eager to block roads, set light to forestry plantations and blow up the dams and pipes that supply England with water.

"You're going to see problems," one man assured me. "It's too late. Michael Foster's done it. He's the man responsible for an awful lot of things that are going to happen. If the Government carries on the way it's going, it'll create a second Ulster."

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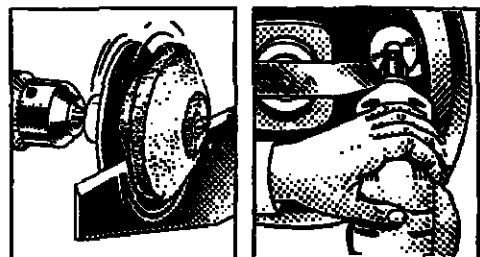
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Poppy love

Anna Pavord reveals Rev William Wilks's 20-year affair with Shirley

Over the years, other colours have cropped up – a deep, almost black poppy, a beautiful magenta with purple smudges, a rich red – and these are the ones I mark for seed. The seedlings of the good ones often have leaves that are more intricately edged (as if they have been cut with pinking shears) than the ordinary kinds. The flowers don't last long, but the seedheads are dramatic, much better than those of either the Shirley or the Iceland poppies.

When the foliage starts to get drab and scrappy, you can pull up the opium poppies that you don't want, leaving the best to self-seed. Last year, I added a strange, fringed poppy, red with bold white smudges, called "Danegro Laced" (Thompson & Morgan, L139) hoping it would perpetuate itself as easily as the other opium poppies. It didn't.

Fortunately, there are plenty more to try. I haven't yet grown any of the great double powderpuff poppies, except the ubiquitous "Pink Chiffon." Thompson & Morgan lists most of these under *P. lactinatum*, but puts "Black Penny" (the name describes it exactly) under *P. paeoniflorum*. Black Penny is the one I am going to add to the poppy mix this year. Of course, it's not really black, but it's intensely dramatic, growing about 3ft tall.

The best selection of poppy seed to sow now for displays next year is available from Thompson & Morgan, Poplar Lane, Ipswich, Suffolk IP8 3BU (01473 688821) and Chiltern Seeds, Bortree Stile, Uxerston, Cumbria LA12 7PB (01229 581137). Thompson & Morgan also hold the National Collection of annual poppies. It is open by appointment, for the price of a donation to the National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens. Flowers courtesy of Wild at Heart, The Kiosk, Westbourne Grove, London W11 (0171-727 3095).



PHOTOGRAPHS: NICOLA KURTZ

I always supposed that the Shirley poppies flowering now in the garden were named after some Temple-esque girl, given to floating chiffon. Not so. They are the creation of the Rev William Wilks, one of those fortunate 19th-century clergymen whose gardening took precedence over anything else in their lives. Wilks was vicar of Shirley, near Croydon, and created the strain from a single, white-edged poppy growing among the wild, plain red ones in a corner of his vicarage garden.

Wilks marked the flower, and the following year raised 200 plants from the single head of seed. He rugged his plants severely, and for 20 years selected only the best of the seedlings to grow on. In this laborious way, he created a strain of poppies, in a wide range of colours, that look like tissue paper left out in the rain. "I am about my flowers between three and four o'clock in the morning," he wrote, "so as to pull up and trample on the bad ones before the bees have a chance of conveying pollen to others."

The wild poppy of the cornfield from which the Shirley poppies were bred is *Papaver rhoeas*. I've been growing a wonderful mixture called 'Angel's Choir' (Thompson & Morgan, £2.49), fragile, double-flowered Shirley poppies in fabulous, bruised

colours: dirty, greyish pink.
Victorian dove mauve, some
colours with a picotee edge of a
paler colour round their petals.
The rain hasn't suited them but,
between the torrents, I've been
twisting bits of wire round the stems of
some whose seed I want to save.

This is the way to fine-tune a mixture to your own ends, abandoning the wishy-washy colours you don't like and developing your own strain of seed. You can do it with other poppies, too, such as the Iceland poppies, *Papaver nudicaule*. They are neater plants than the rangy Shirley poppies, the flowers rising from a basal rosette of finely cut leaves, not hairy, like *P. rhoeas*, but faintly glaucous.

your own mixtures of creams and apricots and pinks, eliminating, if you want, the bright yellows and oranges of the original species.

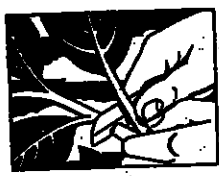
The question this season is whether the seed heads are ever going to dry off sufficiently to ripen seed. If they do, you should be able to collect it and sow it this month. Sow first in a 5-inch pot, just pressing the seed into the surface of the compost. Cover the pot with cling film and a slate or

That is the laborious way. If you have light, sandy soil and a lucky streak, you can just crush the seed heads and wave them over the patch you want to cover. This does not work on my heavy clay, which is why I go through the more long-winded process of raising plants in pots. Take with a pinch of salt seedsmen Thompson & Morgan's assertion that this poppy "will come up year after year in the garden".

Easier in that respect are the opium poppies, varieties of *Papaver somniferum*. These are the most trouble-free of all on our soil. Plants have grown 4ft tall this year, with masses of buds, minding the wet less than the Shirley poppies. The leaves are handsome, the best of all the poppies: rich, waxy, silvery. The common kind in our garden has deep purple flowers with dark smudges at the bottoms of the petals, which are ranged around a ring of pale cream stamens. Bumblebees come stumbling

gardening

Work by a wide range of modern sculptors will be displayed this summer in the gardens of 18th-century Wimpole Hall, a National Trust property near Royston in Cambridgeshire. The exhibition includes a reclining figure by the late Henry Moore. Other sculptures incorporate holograms, wind mobiles and work in bronze and marble. Wimpole was once owned by the 2nd Earl of Oxford, who employed sculptors Francis Bird and John Ryckbacker to beautify the estate. Lord Harley, the 4th Earl, also brought in James Thornhill to decorate the chapel. Look out for the sculptures in the area between the stable block and the pleasure grounds. Wimpole Hall is open Tuesdays and on weekends (10.30am-5pm, but house 1pm-5pm), admission £5.20.



CUTTINGS

The exhibition runs until 15 September.

Tim Fell writes from Abresford about tomatoes (*The Independent*, 14 June). 'Perhaps you aren't familiar with the catalogue of Simpson's Seeds, 27 Meadowbrook, Old Oxted, Surrey RH8 9LT (01883 715242). They describe themselves as 'Founders and Administrators of the British Tomato Growers' Club'. Simpson's catalogue has 118 varieties of tomato. It also has an

amazing range of peppers, both sweet and hot. The 40 or so hot ones are classified in their fieriness on a scale from one to 20."

I've just taken delivery of a fine bodied seat for the garden. Boding didn't always have its present local connotations; it was a woodman's honourable trade in simple furniture, working outside in woodlands of ash and hazel copice, with low-tech tools. Our seat is hazel, with sturdy, fat legs and a seat made of hazel poles laid lengthways on strong supports. Thin, splayed-out hazel wands make fan-like panels along the base of the seat. For contact, made easy, contact Jonathan Marshall, Holm Cottage, New Street, Marnehill, Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10 1QA, (01258 821252).

Weekend work

Cut down the flowered stems of enthusiastic self-seeders such as *aquilegia*, sweet rocket and Jacob's ladder. A twist of wire around the stems of specific foxgloves and opium poppies, while they still have a remnant of colour in them, will help remind you which spikes you want to keep for future self-seeding.

You could also start a new colony of foxgloves from seed. The ground is well soaked at the moment and you can either sow seed in a straight row outside, as though you were sowing radishes, or broadcast them over the patch you want to fill. Either way, you will have to thin out or transplant seedlings later.

side). Remember that foxgloves do best in damp, cool ground. They are excellent in shade.

Dead-head roses to encourage further flowering. Keep picking sweet peas. They will soon stop flowering if they are allowed to go to seed. I am growing mine up wigwams again this year. Growing them cordon-style was interesting, and produced flowers with wonderfully long stems, but the general effect was not as pretty as the wigwams.

This year I'm growing 'Antique Fantasy Mixed' (Thompson & Morgan, £1.49), which produces smaller but better scented flowers than the norm, in a good, deep rich mix of colours. 'Terry Wogan' (Urwins, £1.29) I chose for the scent, not the name. The darkest of this year's crop is 'Black Knight' (Mr Fothergill, 79p), an old, grandiflora type, bred by


Henry Eckford in 1898.

Continue to remove side-shoots from tomato plants and mulch courgettes and cucumbers to conserve moisture. Transplant cabbages and broccoli from seed beds to their final positions.

Take cuttings of garden pinks. Choose shoots about 3in long and stick them round the edge of pots which you have filled with a sandy mixture of soil. Firm the soil down well around the cuttings and keep the pot well watered.

Take cuttings of the big indoor *Begonia rex*. If you slit the veins under a leaf and lay it flat on the soil, weighted down with pebbles, small new plants grow from the cuts. I prime mine (which spends the summer outside) by cutting out one or two of the longest stems each year. If you take the top 6 in. of each stem and pot it up singly in compost, it, too, will readily grow into a new plant.

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Nasal warfare

With the blossoming of the perfume market, writes Debbie Davis, scent manufacturers around the world are pulling out the stoppers

The French ladle it on, the Italians steer clear. Japanese men have a penchant for eyebrow tweezers, and the British have a fondness for subtle bathtime smellies.

According to the research specialists Euromonitor, the market for perfume is booming. Last year in America, sales topped \$2.2bn. France came a close second with \$925m, making the French market for perfume bigger than our mar-

ket for staple products such as potatoes and sliced bread.

Look closely at Euromonitor's statistics on how much deodorant and bath oil we use compared with our French or Japanese counterparts, and you start to realise the big cultural differences that remain between nations. Perfume may be the third largest sector of the wider cosmetics and toiletries market in France, but in Japan the market barely exists. Culturally, a strong scent is inappropriate in Japan; if women do use perfume, it may be designed to last for only an hour. So you apply it at the start of your

and an eyebrow pencil. There is even a template to help men to achieve designer eyebrows. Consumers worldwide may have a never-ending appetite for new products, but all is not roses in the English garden of fragrance. Euromonitor estimates that the average Frenchwoman spent about £36 last year on perfumes, almost double that of her UK counterpart. Perfumes and fragrances, meaning full-strength scent, and *eau de parfum* and *eau de toilette*, distributed

taken to the gym. And you can buy it anywhere: from the cosmetic hall of a department store, from a counter at Lower Records, off the shelf of a discount chemist. In short, it is the antithesis of the French perfumes that dominated the market from the time of Louis XVI to the early Seventies.

Roger Dove, PR manager at the French perfume company Guerlain, has watched the market change. "Twenty-five years ago, perfume was a real luxury which nobody bought for themselves," he says. But, like overseas travel, "price has had an impact across the market, and now the masses can afford to buy it," says Mr Dove. For an extremely reasonable £28.50, Selfridges offers a 50ml CKOne *eau de toilette* spray plus heavily-scented CKOne body wash and body moisturiser packs in a 100ml size.

Classic French perfumes such as Shalimar and Mitsouko by Guerlain are fighting back. Glamorous bottle shapes from the past are making a return, and there are campaigns to persuade us to behave more like our French counterparts, and pay a king's ransom for tiny bottles of full-strength perfume.

"In the UK and the US, women don't understand that perfume is the softest of the fragrance strengths," says Mr Dove. "We buy *eau de toilette*, which has qualities more suited to a good dietary product. Its instability as a mixture means that 50 per cent leaves the skin within half an hour of application, whereas 50 per cent of perfume remains on the skin after 24 hours. The rapidity with which *eau de toilette* is lost makes it strong but short-lived; perfume is soft and sedate by comparison."

Guerlain may have a point about strengths, but it is on less sure ground with consumers when it talks about perfumers and their assistants. "Perfume is the true expression of a scent because it is the only thing the perfumer creates. The *eau de parfum* and *eau de toilette* of a scent are created by the assistant," says Mr Dove.

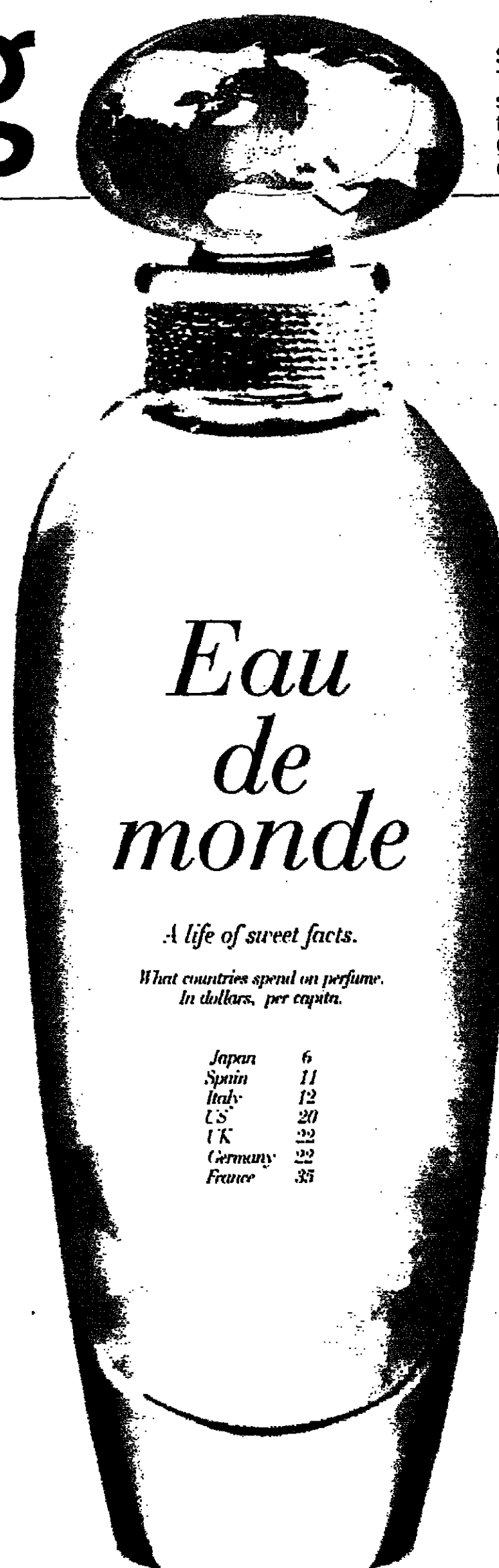
Consumers, who have demanded and got brands that are consistent

and open about their provenance, will find this one hard to swallow. Earlier this month, the industry recognised another communication gap between the perfumer and his customers. At the Fragrance Foundation Awards, the perfume equivalent of the Oscars, the innovation of the year award went not to a fragrance, but to a system that helps perfumers understand customers' likes and dislikes. Developed by Oust, a fragrance manufacturer, the Multimedia Initiative Redefining Intelligent Aromatic Design (Miriad) is essentially art psychotherapy for perfumers who are frustrated by our lack of ability to put into words what we like about a smell. Intrepid poets may have tried to capture the essence of a scent, but like most people they lack the perfumer's vocabulary. Miriad allows perfumers to use a series of concentric circles, coded by colour and width, which build up into pictures representing a particular mix of smells which you or I may like. The Fragrance Foundation felt that Miriad would inspire new ways of using raw materials.

Selfridges sees anything up to 50 new perfume launches annually. This summer we have the US designer Tommy Hilfiger launching *tommy girl*, his new perfume for women. Is it galling for companies such as Estée Lauder, which slave away year in and year out, to watch the Hilfigers of this world stack up phenomenal perfume sales almost overnight? Hardly. Who owns the Hilfiger perfumes? You guessed it: *tommy girl*, and *tommy*, Hilfiger's perfume for men, are made by Estée Lauder companies.

These new perfumes will do well if they outsell Chanel No 5, which always comes back at Christmas as the top seller - though that certainty is under threat this year with the threatened boycott of Chanel by ecologists. They claim that the use of essential oils extracted from an exotic tree is threatening Brazil's rainforests.

Even so, there is something about the lasting power of French perfume which American designer gels have yet to topple.



A life of sweet facts.

What countries spend on perfume. In dollars, per capita.

Japan	6
Spain	11
Italy	12
US	20
UK	22
Germany	22
France	35

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Intrepid poets may have tried to capture the essence of a scent, but they lack the perfumer's vocabulary

lunch hour, and return to the workplace without offending colleagues. On the other hand, Euromonitor says, Japan's market for skin care is the largest in the world. Differences in the basic beauty regime of women, and to a lesser extent men, fuel heavy expenditure. Japanese women regularly use several different types of moisturisers, while Japanese men buy face-packs, nose-packs, male-specific hair bleach and eyebrow-design kits. The kits include an eyebrow brush and comb, special scissors, tweezers

as Calvin Klein's CKOne, which epitomise the whole-body approach to smelling good, have consequently gone off the clock.

"CKOne is head and shoulders above everything else," says Tracy Wharton, retail operations manager of Selfridge's perfumery and cosmetics hall. It took Selfridges less than six months to clock up £1m-worth of sales of this politically correct, inoffensive scent. CKOne goes anywhere, anatomically, socially and geographically. Its refillable travel bottles cry out to be

BBQ essentials...

The time: This weekend
The place: Your back garden

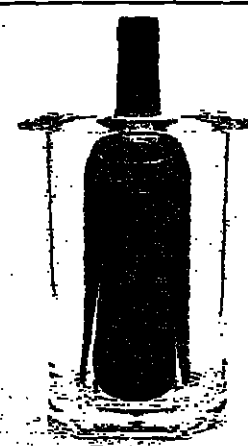
If the sun's out long enough to grill a sausage you can be sure someone will suggest having a barbecue. They're a great idea providing you've got the right stuff. But it's no fun if you risk getting third-degree burns while desperately trying to cook over a makeshift brick affair. So get prepared for that long-awaited summer and invest in the following key items.

This trendy minimalist Arcia Galaxie 3 barbecue at £390 has ribbed and flat griddles. The cast iron is excellent for cooking eggs, fish, mushrooms. For stockists call 01 458 274666

The Sterling 1022 at £199 has ceramic briquettes designed to reduce flare-up, a warming shelf and grill area, gas ring and shelf. For stockists call 01 51 3368246

Avoid burnt fingers with a barbecue stainless steel tool set, £19.95, sausage grill, £4.25, fish grill, £6.50 and veggie holder, £7.95. If you fancy having a barbecue on the beach or while camping try this portable style at £13.75 and pack some night lights like these yellow flower candles £1.95, all from Lakeland Plastics on 015394 88100

Keep the salad crisp in this yer-



low bowl, £12.95, hands clean with strawberry nappies, £1.75 and the wine chilled with this cooler, £11.45, all from Waitrose

If you don't have time to make your own marinades try M&S vegetable kebabs £1.99 and char-grilled marinated whole chicken with extra virgin olive oil, parsley and thyme, £3.99

Chicken kebab recipe:
375g of boneless chicken pieces
3 tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoon chilli sauce
1 large red pepper
2 corn cobs
4 pickling onions, peeled
soaked bamboo skewers

Cut the chicken into cubes. In a bowl combine soy and chilli sauces. Add the chicken and leave to marinate for 30 minutes. Drain, reserving the marinade. Soak the bamboo skewers in cold water. Thread the chicken, large cubes, the corn into 2cm-wide pieces. Thread chicken, pepper, onion and sweetcorn on soaked skewers. Barbecue or grill until golden, brushing with marinade during cooking. Serves 4

If all else fails buy an electric door Magimix at £149 which uses hot stones instead of charcoal

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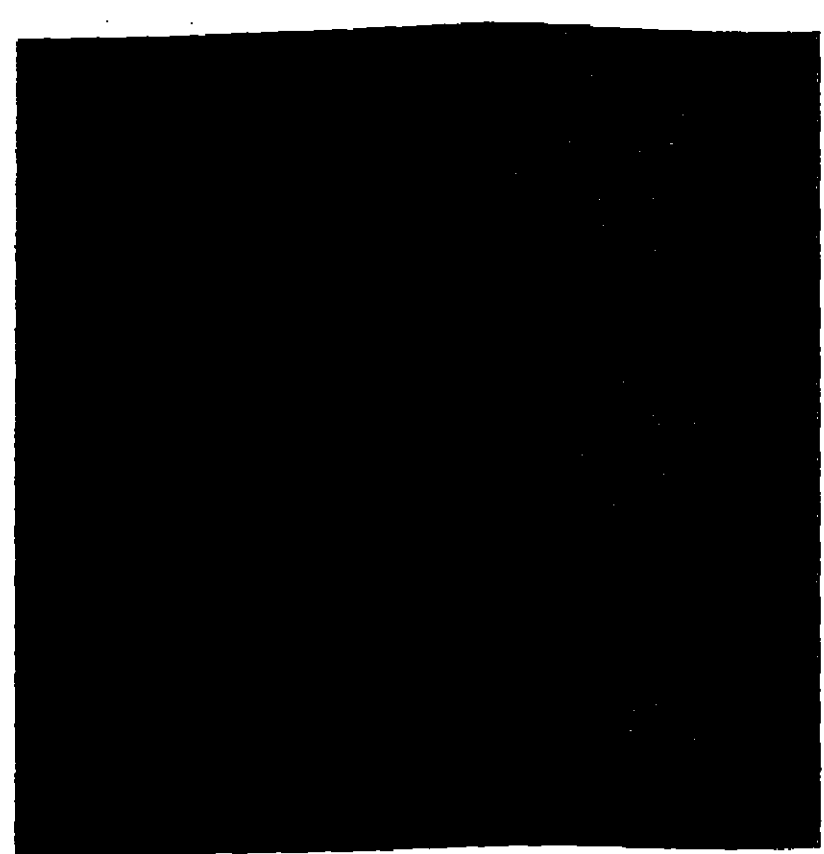
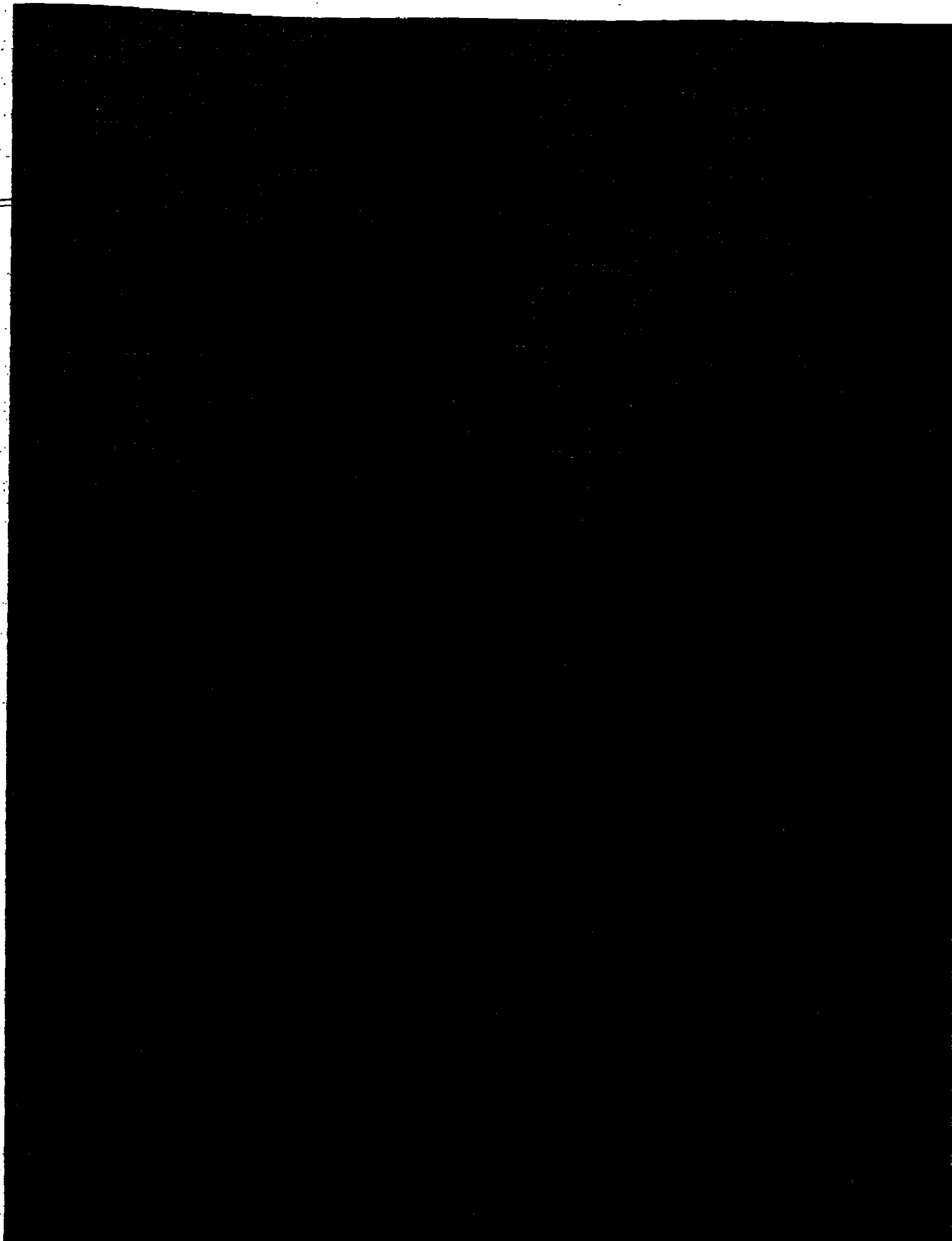
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THE INDEPENDENT IT IS...ARE YOU?

سازمان تامین اجتماعی

Sales guide
The new Ford Puma
see the ad
then buy the car
Capt. the working car
coupe is back



Style needn't break the bank, it just takes a good eye and a little legwork, as Melanie Rickey reveals.
Photographs by Robert Astley-Sparke

Shopping for clothes can be a depressing business when you have only enough money to buy a glossy magazine instead of shopping at Harvey Nichols. You just after clothes which cost a week's salary, but instead, spend your spare time scrabbling around the back of the wardrobe for a long-forgotten gem which can be altered, dyed or jazzed up in some way.

If you identify with this sad state, stop! Look at the beautiful photographs above and left. Check out the captions. The lace dress cost £4 (not £4,000, from Valentino) and a version of it could be on sale in a charity shop near you; the bodice was bought for £3 from a London street market (not £300, from Rigby & Peller) - and what's more, you can find more of the same at a car boot sale or charity shop for as little as 20p.

Charity shops developed a bad name for themselves in the late Eighties, as the place where rebellious teenagers, pensioners and newly arrived foreign nationals looking for English clothes came together with one goal: to find a bargain. In fact, while this still rings true, charity shops have become so popular with students and bargain-hunting middle-class mums that Oxfam has been forced to consider importing clothes from Eastern European countries, particularly for their London stores. Many thrift aficionados who live in a major city, such as London, Manchester or Glasgow, wouldn't dream of shopping in their local charity shop. To find the best bargains, they feel, a pilgrimage to a smaller town or village is essential.

Genevieve Holledge, who has just completed a college course in fashion and design, keeps a keen eye on charity-shop bargains. Like any teenager she wants to look individual, relevant, stylish and not too weird. Charity, car boot and jumble sale shopping can satisfy all of these fashion needs - even on a restricted budget. We set her a style challenge: find an outfit for every day of the week for £50, not including shoes. The results are below.

During her quest Genevieve found rich pickings in her home town, Tring, Hertfordshire. "In communities like this, where well-off families ditch clothes before they are worn out, everything is in better condition and much cheaper than in central London," she says.

The manageress of the second-hand shop, which raises money for the Jan Rennie hospice, is becoming similarly street-wise.

She said: "Young people bring in things which are just a few months old because they are bored with them. Older people bring in stuff they have been hoarding for years. More and more young people are coming in for a good old rummage and because they can find something cheap."

"Once we sold a pair of patent leather thigh-high kitten heel boots for £5. They could have cost more than £100 in a fashion shop."

The key thing to look out for when buying second-hand clothing is fabric quality. Never buy a garment that looks good but is unfeasible to wear, such as a tight, unbreathable nylon polo-neck. Also always check for sweat stains, missing buttons and unremendable rips; these small defects will make the garment unpleasant to wear, and take the fun out of the fact that it cost 50 pence.

Genevieve is obviously an expert in all these matters; she came up with seven very different outfits which look shop bought, and put them together in the way a professional fashion stylist would, given the same challenge. She over spent the £50 by a mere £1.50. For a pound or two more she could have bought some accessories, such as a Chanel-style clutch bag for £1 and a chunky bangle for 50p.

Let her success offer hope to those who are desperate for a "new" outfit to wear tonight.

Cheap chic

Main picture: turquoise lace long-sleeve mini-dress, £4, from Oxfam; cream knickers, £20, from Agent Provocateur, 6 Broadwick Street, Soho, London W1, for inquiries and mail order call 0171-439 0229. Top right: purple lace bodice, £3, from Portobello market, black knickers, £11.50, from a selection by Calvin Klein from House of Fraser stores nationwide, and Selfridges, Oxford Street, London W1.

Stylist: Pierre Miller; hair: Paul Merritt for Hair Associates, Knightsbridge; make-up: Hitoko Urago for Shu Uemura; models: Natalie at Select and Jamie at Take 2



What it cost. What you could spend at designer shops in brackets.

1 Slip dress (taken in)	£1.00	(Morgan £45.99)
Coat	£8.00	(Morgan £95.99)
2 Suede coat	£8.00	(Versace £475)
Black polo neck	£1.50	(Warehouse £25)
Lace skirt	£2.50	(Anna Molinari £195)
3 Denim skirt (taken in)	£2.50	(Paco Rabanne £185)
T-shirt	75p	(Warehouse £25)
Adidas jacket	£2.50	(JD Sports £88)

4 Cream cords	£2.50	(Hennes £29.99)
White T-shirt	£1.00	(YSL £79)
Wrangler jacket	£2.50	(JD Sports £88)

5 Jeans	£3.50	(Levi's Stores £49.99)
Boob tube	£1.50	(Stienburg Tolden £45)
White cardigan	£1.00	(Warehouse £35)

6 Army trousers	£2.50	(French Connection £35.95)
Body warmer	£2.50	(Belle £169)
Black polo (again)		
Adidas trainers		£44.99

7 White suit jacket	£4.50	(Cerutti £375)
Skirt	£2.50	(Cerutti £295)
T shirt	75p	(Agnes B £33)

Research: Genevieve Holledge / Pictures: Nicola Kurtz

SUMMER SALES GUIDE

compiled by Melanie Rickey

High Fashion

Agnes B, Floral Street, WC2 (0171-379 1992), sale now on. Giorgio Armani, 37-42 Sloane Street, SW1; Emporio Armani, Long Acre, WC2 and branches nationwide, sale now on (0171-235 6232/828 8188). Manolo Blahnik shoes, 49-51 Old Church Street, SW3 (0171-352 3863), sale starts 1 Aug. for two days only. Paddy Campbell, 8 Gees Court, St Christopher's Place, W1 and 17 Beauchamp Place, SW3 (0171-493 5646), sale now on. Ally Capellino, 66 Sloane Avenue, SW3, starts 12 July (0171-591 8300). Cerruti, 106 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-495 5880), sale now on. Chanel, 26 Old Bond Street, W1 (0171-493 5040) and 31 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 6631), sale starts today. Comme des Garçons, 59 Brook Street, W1 (0171-493 1258), sale now on. Patrick Cox (shoes), 3 Symonds Street, SW3 (0171-730 6504), Wembley (as above and clothes), 129 Sloane Street, SW1, both start 12 July. Dolce & Gabbana, 175 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 0335). Nicole Farhi, 11 Floral Street, WC2, and branches (0171-499 8368), sale now on. Alberta Ferretti, 205-6 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 2349), sale now on. Galerie Gauthier, Draycott Avenue, SW3 (0171-564 4648), sale now on. Gina Shoes, 189 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 2932), starts 12 July. Gucci, 32-33 Old Bond Street, W1 and 17-18 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-499 1081), sale now on. Katharine Hammett, 20 Sloane Street, SW1 and 38 Princes Square, Glasgow (0171-323 1002), sale now on. Hermes, 155 New Bond Street, W1 and 179 Sloane Street, SW1, sale starts today. Margaret Howell, 29 Beauchamp Place, SW3 and 24 Brook Street, W1 (0171-584 2462), sale starts today. Betty Jackson, 311 Brompton Road, SW3, sale now on. Donna Karan, 19 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-589 7844), DKNY, 27 Old Bond Street, W1 (0171-495 3100), both sales now on. Christian Lacroix, Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 2400), sale now on. Max Mara, 153 New Bond Street, W1, 32 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-287 3434), sale now on. Lesy Miyake, 270 Brompton Road, SW3 (0171-351 0903), sale now on. Mulberry, 11-12 Gees Court and branches, also 23-25

Syngate Court, York (0171-491 3900), sale now on. Paul Smith, branches along Floral Street, WC2, R Newbold and Paul Smith Jeans, Langley Court, WC2 and Manchester and Nottingham (0171-379 71330), sale starts 2 Aug. Polo Ralph Lauren, 143 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-491 4967), sale starts 12 July. Prada, 43-45 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-635 0088). Sam De Taran, 151 Fulham Road, SW3 (0171-584 0902), sale starts 26 July. Gianni Versace, 34-36 Old Bond Street, W1 (0171-499 1862) and Versace, 92 Brompton Road, SW3 (0171-581 8407), sales now on. Yves Saint Laurent, 33 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 6706), sale now on. Vivienne Westwood, 44 Conduit Street, W1 (0171-439 1109), sale now on. Yogi Biscuits, 42 Shelton Street, WC2 (0171-497 0001), sale now on. Zilliha, 17 Hampstead High Street, NW3 (0171-431 0253), sale now on.

High Street

Burton Menswear, nationwide, sale now on. Blazer, nationwide (0171-447 7200), sale now on. Dorothy Perkins, nationwide, sale now on. Dolcis, nationwide, sale now on. Etam, nationwide, sale now on. Faith Shoes, nationwide (0800 289 2971), sale now on. French Connection, nationwide (0171-580 2507), sale now on. Gap, nationwide (0800 427 789), sale now on. Hennes, nationwide (0171-255 2031), sale now on. Hobbs, nationwide (0172-449 2000), sale now on. Hugo Boss, London, Manchester, Glasgow (0171-724 7919), sale now on. Karen Millen, nationwide (01622 664032), sale now on. Kookai, branches nationwide, sale starts 17 July. Oasis, nationwide (01865 881986), sale now on. Ravel, nationwide, sale now on. Red or Dead, 1 Sloane Street, SW1, 33 Neal Street, WC2, Hype DF, High Street Kingston, 14 Cheapside, Nottingham, 18 Eldon Court, Devonshire Street, Sheffield, sale now on. Savoy Tailors Guild, nationwide (0171-447 7200), sale now on. The Suit Company, nationwide (0171-447 7200), sale now on. Top Shop, branches nationwide, sale now on. Wallis, nationwide (0181-910 1333), sale now on. Warehouse, nationwide (0171-705 1901), sale now on.

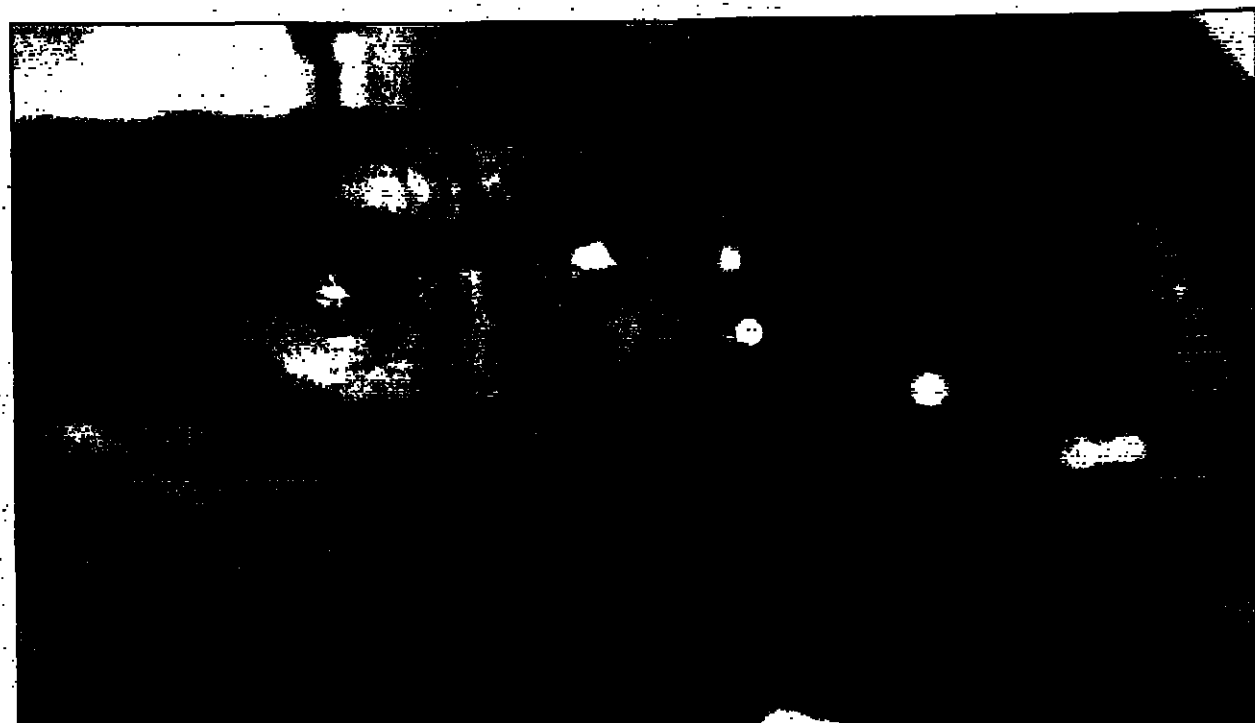
The posthumous stunt

Adwatch: bringing Steve McQueen back to life was a coup for Ford's coupé, writes Meg Carter

Even if Ford's Puma is not destined for cult success, its launch commercial must surely be. You've seen the ad: a pastiche of the Sixties film *Bullitt* complete with posthumous appearance by Steve McQueen who, thanks to latest special-effects wizardry, is seen steering the new Ford model (rather than the Ford Mustang he drove in the original film) through the streets of San Francisco.

It's the nearest of fits. "A driver's drive" is the end-line, and who better than McQueen to symbolise the driver's drive? The ad even skirts neatly round current concerns about advertising that glamorises speedy or reckless driving: in McQueen's hands, the Puma drifts along with smoothness and precision.

The commercial is part of a pan-European launch campaign created by the London advertising agency Young & Rubicam, which shares the Ford advertising business in the UK with its rival Ogilvy & Mather. Although a major advertiser, Ford has not been known for sexy ads - in the words of one agency insider: "It's better known for buying advertising by the yard." Things are changing, however. Following O&M's highly stylised ad for the Probe (in which a man appears to drive across a lunar landscape shrouded by dust storms, to the accompaniment of "Fly Me To The Moon"), Ford ads have virtually become racy. For the launch of the Ka - the first Ford car not designed by a focus group - the advertising campaign didn't even feature the car.



Steve McQueen's 'Bullitt' role is transposed from a Mustang to the Puma

The Puma is aimed at two groups of consumers whom the agency authoritatively defines as "pre-responsible" and "post-responsible". As Ford's Y&R account managing director Kevin King explains, in plain English that means 25- to 35-year-olds eager to own a sports coupé before settling down, and people aged 45 and over who've done the family car thing and now yearn to live a bit. Like the Ford Mustang in the US, the Puma brings sports-car performance to the mass market, he says. "It's a car with far broader appeal through all social classes." So the agency was eager to find a creative approach that, while mass-market in its appeal, would say something distinctive about the product.

Steve McQueen was therefore an ideal

vehicle. King insists: "Really, we didn't think of anyone else. As soon as you put him in the ad it says everything you could ever hope to say about the car."

A self-confessed car nut, McQueen did his own stunts and had been involved in some of the best car sequences in movie history. Better still, he is remembered by the older target consumers, as well as revered by the younger ones. For proof, look no further than the timely reappraisal of McQueen in current editions of the style magazines *Uncut* and *Esquire*.

Why? Because unlike many of today's brat-pack movie heroes, McQueen endures as the "king of cool". Ford's Andrew Brown enthuses: "McQueen is exactly the right image - a highly respected man's man, with female appeal too." And

a rebel. For if McQueen's lasting appeal is about anything, it's about not toeing the line. The idea of an untamable spirit, however, exactly fitted the creative brief.

Undoubtedly, McQueen's cult status is also enhanced by the fact that, like all the great cult heroes, he's now dead. Luckily for Ford, his demise was neither associated with nefarious substances, nor the result of a road accident (which would, of course, have ruled out James Dean).

So, the next step was to secure clearance from the McQueen estate and Warner Brothers, who own the rights to the film. Not a problem. The finished product even elicited praise from McQueen's son who, Brown proudly boasts, said he was sure his dad would have been proud to be in it.

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ROAD TEST

Ford Puma

By James May

When details of Ford's Puma first escaped some 18 months ago, the new car was widely touted as a Fiesta coupe. A working description has rarely been more misleading. This is not a fast-back variant of the ubiquitous hatch; it is an entirely new car that happens to draw on some Fiesta underpinnings purely from expediency: it is built on a Fiesta floorpan, shares much of its suspension, and uses a revised version of its Zetec engine.

Yet it feels completely different. First, the engine has been enlarged to 1773 cc from the top Fiesta's 1.4 and fitted with variable-intake valve timing. Usually when a small engine is taken to its capacity limits it loses some of its original sweetness; this, however, is by far the best variant on the Zetec theme, and not just because of the power hike to 125bhp. It's possibly the smoothest, certainly the most flexible, and makes the most encouraging noises. Ford's boffins also did much work on making the engine sound good from inside the car — and rightly so, because in a sporting car, sound is an essential but often overlooked element of the way the machine communicates with the driver. And if the engine is a touch Italian in temperament, the gearstick feels positively Germanic in its precision.

The engine and transmission are the heart of an enjoyable car and, though this isn't a blindly fast sportster, the

concept has been admirably addressed. After that, it has to handle Suspension is, of course, essentially Fiesta, but the spring rates are increased and the anti-roll stiffened - which, as any racing car mechanic would tell you, means it feels completely different.

Even so, the Fleeta virtues of crisp turn-in and neutral cornering survive. Willful hoologism on streaming wet roads reveals a hint of the twist when lifting off the throttle in panic mode; otherwise, the grip seems to have far more grip than you'd expect in any situation. My only real gripe is the noise of the interior. The dash layout is fine as is the aluminum-effect fascia pieces and a welcome relief from the threat of Ford's wood-u-like treatment. But I couldn't make myself truly comfortable. The seats themselves are supportive enough; the problem is with adjustment. The height of the driver's seat can be altered electrically, but I kept reaching for an absent tilt lever to lower the front of the squab and banish the sensation of falling backwards off a chair. This may be a result of my disproportionately long legs, which also had me fumbling in vain for a steering wheel reach adjustment.

But I noticed this only on arrival. *En route*, the Puma was immensely entertaining: quick enough without being uncouth, sharp of steering and generally pleasing to operate. A few years ago, no one would have expected that of a small Ford. These days, no one should expect anything else.

● The virtues of crisp turn-in and neutral cornering survive even wilful hooliganism on wet bends ●



Specifications

Price: £14,550 on the road.

Engine: 1,679cc transverse in-line four-cylinder, with four valves per cylinder. 125bhp, 116lb ft. Five-speed manual transmission. **Performance:** top speed 128mph, 0-60 8.8secs; overall fuel consumption 38.2mpg.

Rivals

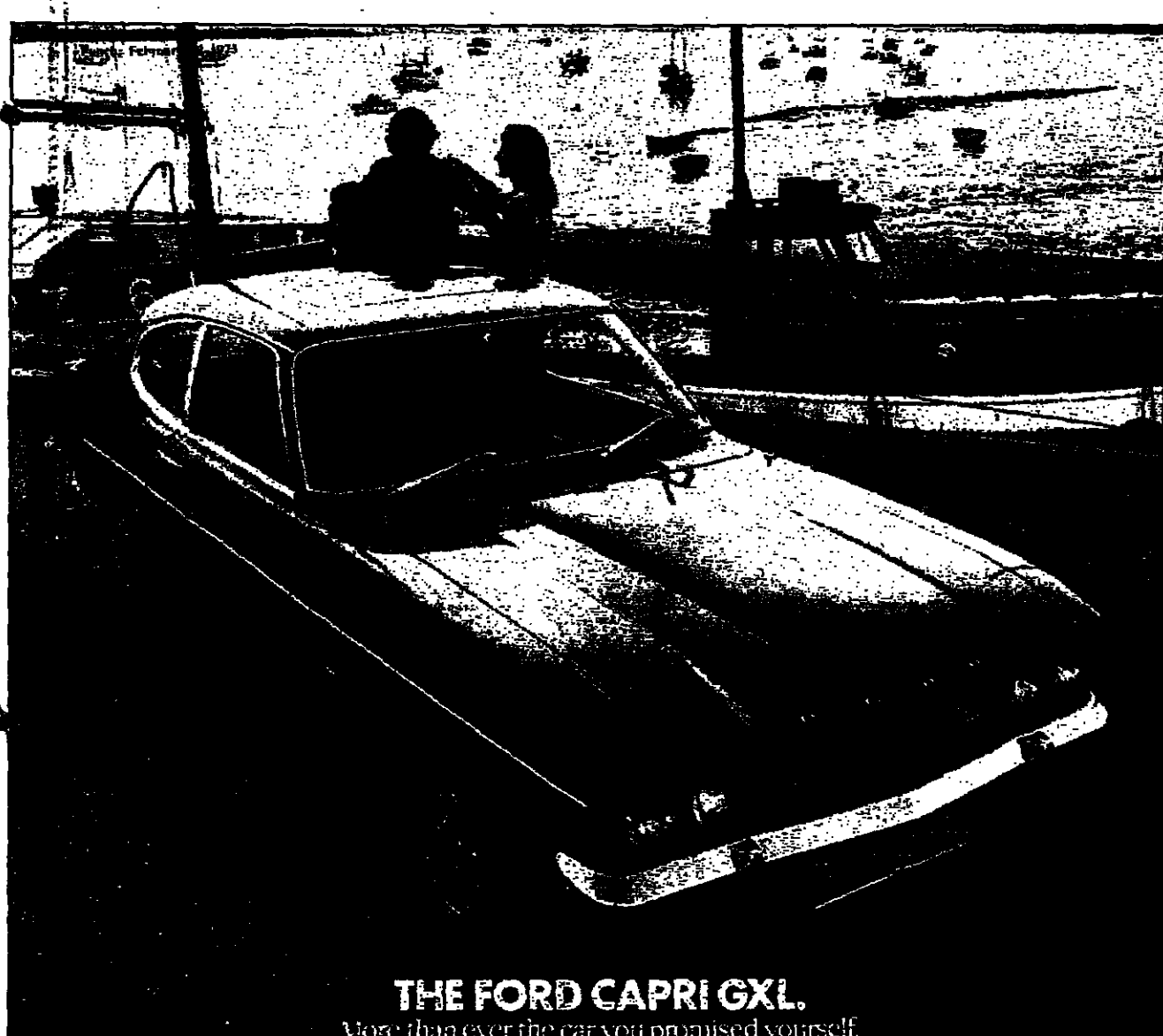
Vauxhall Tigra 1.6, £14,615. Another hatch-based coupé, this time springing from the Vauxhall Corsa. Sadly, its stunning styling and hatchback practicality are way ahead of its dynamics. It's more fun to drive than its donor car.

FORD PUMA

Honda Civic 1.6 VTEC SR Coupé, £15,485 A screaming jewel of an engine and entertaining, yet totally safe, handling. But Civics are looking a bit dowdy in their latest incarnation and Honda still hasn't learned how to build an appealing interior. A lot more enjoyable than it looks, inside and out.

Renault Megane 2.0 Coupé, £14,965 Cramped for the tall and a bit harsh and noisy from inside, but well equipped for the price, great fun to drive and very stylish. Better still if you can stretch to the £16,640 16v version.

but still nothing like as fluid as the Ford.



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The Capri shot to stardom in 'The Professionals' MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: ADVERTISING ARCHIVE; FAR RIGHT, GRANADA SKY BROADCASTING

The bloke's car is back

James Ruppert reports on the return of the well-loved Capri

Think coupés, and you may think glamour: Ferrari, Aston Martin, Jaguar. Alfa Romeo – makers of stylish, expensive sports cars. But in the Sixties, Ford wanted to bring that sort of experience to the masses. So, in 1964, the company launched the Mustang in America and sold 3 million in a decade. The blue-cold coupé looked sensational, ran on proven Ford mechanicals and could be dressed up with thousands of factory-fitted options. In 1968 Ford Europe took the blueprint, designed a rakish body with a long bonnet and sloping rear screen and fitted humble Cortina saloon running-gear to make the Capri.

Now, the first and finest of the European working-class coupés is being reassessed. After a decade of being derided as an automotive larger lout, the Capri is seen to be honest, reliable and characterful, unlike Ford's current and soon-to-be-cancelled Probe coupé. Whereas the name Capri conjures up a bright, sophisticated Continental image, British carmaker Probe conjures up the puntchline to a Benny Hill gag. In the time, though, where the Ford is built, the name has scientific and deep-space connotations – but that does not make it a better car, or hide the fact that underneath it is really just a Jack-lustre Mazda MX6. Ford has learnt its lesson, though, and a Mondeo-based coupé is due to be launched some time next year.

Back in 1968, "the car you always promised yourself" was Ford's slogan to promote the Capri. The large range



fact that Bodie out of the cult TV show *The Professionals* screeched around corners in one, has all helped to make the Capri hip again.

The Capri in the Nineties is supported by ASJ Capri Specialists in Nottingham, Norfolk Capri Spares in Kings Lynn, Ex-Pressed Steel Panels at Keighley, and others. Mechanical parts and most bodywork panels are not a problem, but the interior trim is hard to find. Enthusiasts within the Capri Owner's Club may help, and are the best source of cars to buy.


So, the Capri may be trendy, practical and reliable, but which one should you buy? Not an original model, built before 1974, because it will be a pile of rust. Mark 2 Capris got more practical, thanks to an extra hatchback door, but are no less rusty. The restyled Mark 3 looks better, but buy an Eighties example which won't have rusted so much. As for engines, the 1.3 is pathetic, the 1.6 is fine for general use, and the 2.0 litre is a good compromise between economy and performance.

However, the version most in demand is the V6 2.8L, built from 1981. That is turning into a valuable classic that can fetch more than £5,000. Fast for its time, it has aggressive looks and rugged simplicity – and it can be a handful, but is all the more enjoyable for that. *It's a real bloke's sort of car. The working-class coupé is back.*

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Deep and meaningful

Developers should be delving into basements, writes Penny Jackson

Even those people with a damp, dark cellar will have good words to say for their extra space. Ask someone who has a warm, functional basement how important it is, and you will be told that nothing else makes as big a difference to the house. Yet a new home with a basement is a rare creature indeed.

Walk into a modest new house in Germany or America, say, and the space below ground level will be used to enormous effect. Playrooms, laundry rooms, wine cellars, larders, studies – the list is endless, but the significant point is that buyers expect basements to be provided. By contrast, developers in the UK seem not to have given much thought as to why they don't build them, even though it is clear that buyers increasingly look for the space.

Reasons given for not building them range from extra cost (genuine) to there being no demand (doubtful), to the need to dig deeper in cold countries anyway (imaginative, but untrue). Anyone who has looked at a beautifully finished but tightly packed show house and envisaged themselves fitting into it, will not be surprised to learn that on average new homes in the UK have less useful floor space than in any country in the EU.

So, given the cost of clean land – old industrial sites may not be safe for basements – where better to go than downwards? Building extra floors upwards hits against all sorts of planning restrictions, whereas basements do not. In order to encourage developers, for the first time approved guidance to house builders on basement construction has just been published, under the auspices of the Department of the Environment.



Honeygrove goes underground at their mansion conversion near Tonbridge

PHOTOGRAPH: NICOLA KURTZ

One company that started building houses with basements six years ago is Honeygrove, based in West Kent. On a sloping site – ideal for basements – they put in a garage, billiard room, wine cellar and utility room, which proved popular enough to repeat. They are close to completing a mansion near Tonbridge with nine apartments, three of which have basements.

One of the first buyers has turned his into a library. "The biggest problem with a basement is one of public perception," says Jeremy Streeten, chairman of Honeygrove. "Most people have no idea how

warm and light it can be, unless they come from abroad. They imagine the dark, dingy rooms found in old houses. We have dug down quite deeply so as to give decent headroom. The great thing is that if you can put things such as washing machines and airing cupboards into the basement, it improves upstairs immeasurably."

Clearly, this is a view shared by Laing Homes, one of the UK's largest developers, which is building its first family house with a basement, at Cuffley in Hertfordshire. Paul Healey, the regional managing director, returned from a visit to Virginia

in the US convinced that there is an untapped British market. "Every home we built there, regardless of size, had a basement. Yet here, where land prices are so high, we don't use our space to its full potential. A 2,000-sq-ft house can be turned into a something closer to 3,500 sq ft."

Two of the four houses they are building appear identical from the outside, but one of them will have below ground the equivalent space to that of a three-bedroom detached home. Laing's drawings show a vast room filled with a snooker table and sofas. The buyers who get in fast

enough can make their own choice, though it is doubtful they would include the suit of armour that rather curiously appears in the artist's impression.

There will be a premium to pay. Laing will be looking for offers in the region of £595,000, as opposed to just over £500,000 for its non-identical twin. Paul Healey reckons it will cost an extra £30,000 to £40,000 to build the basement. Using the loft space, which the company is doing increasingly in the London area, is a good deal cheaper.

He explained that building regulations make it more costly because, unlike the situation in America and Germany, where basements are built allowing for water to pass through the walls, in the UK they have to be watertight. One of the enthusiasts behind the new basement guidelines is Stephen Elliott of the Basement Development Group, who worked closely with the National House-Building Council. He believes that the big developers could learn from the self-build sector, which favours basements, not least on energy-saving grounds. He also finds it telling that owners of period homes are increasingly turning to specialist builders to convert cellars into living space, although this can be mucky, and can cost anything between £10,000 and £20,000.

In the end it will all come down to cost, but arguably there are areas where developers could make savings. Surely not all buyers want extravagant bathrooms, expensive kitchens and a variety of mock period bits and bobs? After all, what better period feature to reinvent than the basement?

Honeygrove sales office, call 01752 369 935. Prices start at £375,000.

Three on view

... under £80,000

Hillside, in the South Hams village of Loddiswell, near Kingsbridge in Devon, has no garden to speak of, which makes it an ideal holiday home. The white-painted cottage with exposed beams is bigger than it looks. It has four bedrooms – two on the first floor and two on the second – a dining room and a sitting room. On-road parking is allowed (a rarity for a Devon village). There are shops and a pub nearby. £65,000, through Marchand Petit (01548 857588).



Laburnum Cottage in Mosborough, around 15 miles from the centre of Sheffield, is a stone-built period semi which is believed to be 17th century. The three-bedroom house, which backs on to private land, has exposed stonework in the sitting room and kitchen. The main bedroom is on the first floor, with two more on the second. £71,950, through Frank Innes (0114 279 7779).



Medley Cottage in Rayne, a mile-and-a-half from Braintree, Essex, is Grade II listed, 17th century with timber framing. The white-painted, two-bedroom cottage, like the others nearby, has benefited from a village bypass road. It has a 14ft-by-10ft sitting room, a dining room and a small garden. The agents, Trembath Welch (01371 872117), are asking for offers around £75,000.



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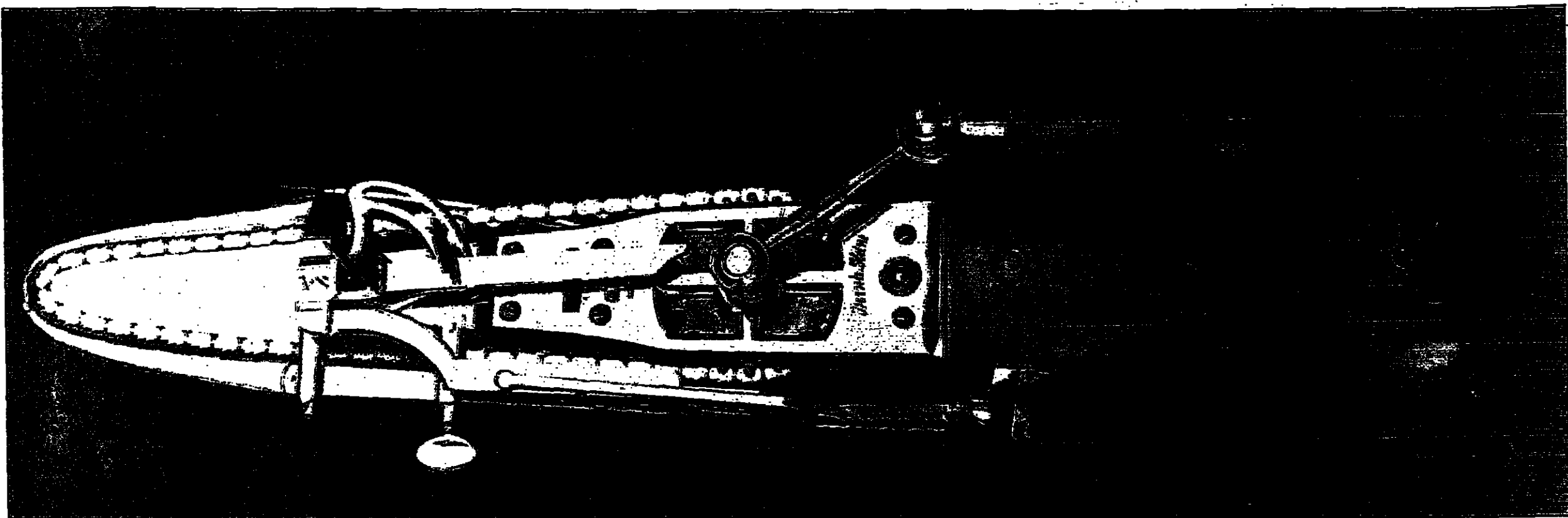
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All cranked up: this 1830s surgical tool, to be auctioned by Christie's South Kensington next Friday, 'went too far, too fast' according to surgeons of the day, it is expected to sell for up to £25,000

Bone up on the chain saw market

Another glass dish of Sir Alexander Fleming's penicillin mould is for sale, this time at Christie's South Kensington, estimated at £6,000 to £8,000. Last March, a similar one, inscribed by the Nobel prizewinner, fetched £23,000 at Sotheby's.

One cannot help wondering whether these neatly boxed specimens are about to become as common at auction as Charlie Chaplin's canes or Queen Victoria's knickers. How many mouldy dishes did the frustrated Fleming press upon sympathetic colleagues in the years between 1928, when he discovered the non-toxic antibiotic, and 1940, when Professor Ernst Chain finally devised a way of manufacturing it?

At least this one has an impressive provenance, having got a mention in Fleming's biography, thus acquiring sensation value. It is almost as sensational as the 1830s hand-cranked surgical chain saw in the same sale of medical instruments as the mould next Friday (10.30am). The contraption avoided the tissue damage caused by to-and-fro sawing but surgeons complained it "went too far, too fast". Estimate: £20,000-£25,000.

Four years ago, in South Ken's first sale of medical instruments, an earlier chain saw, also by Heine of Wurzburg, was

Collect to invest: medical instruments, although gruesome, are gaining popularity, writes John Windsor

bought for £23,100 by the Thackray Medical Museum in Leeds. Since that sale, museums and fascinated medics have bought medical instruments at South Ken twice a year, making it a modestly rewarding field for investment. About 60 per cent of buyers are private collectors; some 30 per cent of the lots go to the United States and 20 per cent to Europe.

Not everybody hankers after a dish of mould or a surgical chain saw, especially at those prices, but both are clues to the way the medical instrument market works. The earlier chain saw, though less sophisticated, was the more decorative: it had ivory handles secured with gilt-brass bands. Buyers favour the decorative.

But those gilt-brass bands are the kind of hidey-holes that infectious bugs love. Such charming but potentially lethal decoration tailed off around 1830-40 when Joseph Lister's pronouncements on antiseptic surgery began to be taken seriously. Author and dealer Elisabeth Bennion, who has written the three definitive books on medical instruments, says she seldom deals in post-Lister instruments.

Fleming revered Lister's antiseptic research. So, in a sense, his dish of anti-septic could be seen as a market spoiler. Modern surgical instruments – unadorned, stainless, easily sterilised – are not as desirable as, say, the iron 17th-century German boy's saw with carved ivory eagle's head handle, estimated £3,000-£4,000 next Friday.

Sensation and decoration are valuable selling points, especially in combination. Both the chain saw and the eagle's head saw will hold their value as talking points. These days, it is increasingly difficult to buy sensational but not uncommon 19th-century ivory-handled tooth keys (one twist, and it's out) for under £200 and prices are rising steadily. Do dentists brandish them at their dinner parties as the sugary desserts are served? And whoever paid £322 at South Ken last December for a gruesome Victorian oak mortuary trolley must be having hours of fun.

For under £300, to amuse, amaze or horrify your friends, you could buy at South Ken next Friday a human foetal skull, a French glass breast pump, a

Chinese ivory anatomical model of a woman, a cased post-mortem set including hammer and chisel to sever joints, or a veterinary lamb castrator.

One London dealer in scientific and medical instruments, Peter Delehar, organiser of the annual International Scientific and Medical Instrument Fair, refuses to have surgical tools in his shop. "They make me feel uncomfortable," he says. His stock is strong on ingenious ophthalmic devices such as, for £190, a unique Dunn's colour blindness test of 1890 consisting of coloured glass discs back-lit by a candle and a hand-held colour chart. Puzzle: do the colour-blind see illuminated and printed colours differently?

In this market, there is surprisingly little "cross-over" value – that is, prices hiked by competitive bidding between medical collectors and, say, collectors of silver, porcelain, glass or antiques. Many of Mr Delehar's and Mrs Bennion's customers are strictly medical specialists. A GP who collects baby-feeding devices, for example, might prefer a curio that is

a missing link in the evolution of baby feeding to an expensive 18th-century silver one by Paul Storr (if he ever made any).

Mrs Bennion reports that specialist interest in antique stethoscopes and hearing trumpets is pushing up their value. They are popular retirement and birthday presents, often beautifully crafted and do not challenge the squeamish.

You would not get in paying £5,000-£10,000 retail for a fine-condition cylindrical wooden stethoscope by the instrument's French inventor, Laennec, who taught himself wood turning in Napoleonic times. The price 10 years ago was about £6,000.

At £150, a humble 1890s wooden conversation tube (ear trumpet) would be good value. Or invest £300-£500 next Friday in a silver-plated London-dome trumpet with fancy scrolled grille.

As for antiquarian medical instruments, they are cheap and, according to London antiques dealer Chris Martin, as yet undiscovered by medics. He will sell you a 14cm long Roman 1st to 3rd century AD bronze spatula for £60.

Americans are going for Civil War cases of surgeons' instruments – the first-ever standard issue. Some collectors are hoarding them. Ten years ago they were £750-

£800, now they are around £1,200 and still rising. Christie's South Ken auctioneer Mark James reports consistently strong demand for 19th-century cases of surgeons' instruments: they have risen about 30 per cent in value in four years. Next Friday's sale has amputation sets with estimates between £300 and £800. Do not try these at home.

As if cued by *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, many collectors see medical instruments, notably the obstetric and gynaecological, as the history of thought materialised. In Victorian times, anaesthesia delivered childbirth into the hands of the surgeon as well as the local midwife. Fearsome cervical dilators and forceps (under £200 a set in Friday's sale) were wielded by men who were familiar with the 19th-century pathologist - Virchow's opinion that "woman is a pair of ovaries with a human being attached, whereas man is a human being furnished with a pair of testes".

Christie's South Kensington (0171-581 7611), International Scientific and Medical Instrument Fair, Radisson Portman Hotel, Portman Square, London W1, 26 October (10am-4pm), entry £3. Peter Delehar (0171-727 9860), Elisabeth Bennion (0181-543 0043), Chris Martin (0181-382 1509/4359).

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Long-term future impossible to predict

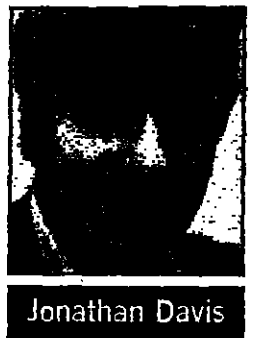
It is always tempting to play the game of talking about how the stock market is thinking as if it were a human being with a coherent and rational point of view. But there are times when you realise why two of the greatest books ever written about the market were called *The Crowd* and *Extraordinary Popular Delusions*.

Crowds often move in herd-like ways, but there are also occasions when they seem to be pulling in three different directions at once, with nobody quite sure which way they should be going.

It has been just that sort of week this week, with investors not for the first time seemingly unable to make up their minds whether they liked the Budget or not. Having marked prices down the week before, the market-makers were busy marking them up again the day before Mr Brown gave his Budget in the Commons.

After going down first thing on Thursday, share prices took off again for the rest of the day, helped as ever by the strength of Wall Street.

The noticeable increase in market volatility is not a total surprise. As I have mentioned before, Budgets never see the markets working at their best. There is too much information to absorb too quickly, and the lasting implications take time to



Jonathan Davis

Investors seem to be unable to make up their minds about whether or not they liked the Budget

sink in. Just about the only golden rule, in fact, is that the initial verdict of the stock market and the newspapers, whatever it is, tends to be the wrong one. Don't just take my word for it.

As it happens, I spent much of Wednesday afternoon with one of Britain's best-known and most experienced investment managers, talking about the lessons he had learnt from nearly 50 years in the business. He reminded me, quite voluntarily, of the fact that the way the market moves in the 48 hours before and after the Budget is normally a totally reliable indicator of the way the markets will go in

future. Reliable, that is, but only in a contrary sense.

If everyone likes a Budget, he told me, then history's later verdict will be unkind. And vice versa. He didn't say you could bet your life on it, but that was the implication. He himself made it a rule never to make any lasting adjustments to his portfolio until the initial euphoria or disappointment has had time to evaporate. I suppose the classic case was Geoffrey Howe's 1981 Budget, the one that left the "wets" in the Cabinet fuming, and prompted one of the chancellor's colleagues to call his Budget the "economics

of the madhouse". It turned out to mark pretty much the turning point in the 1980/1981 recession, and the start of the biggest bull market the UK has ever seen. It was also incidentally the year when it was possible, for the first time in years, to make a big capital gain on gilts. Nobody foresaw either event at the time.

So where does that leave us now? The market's strength before and after Budget day does not, on this view, inspire much longer-term confidence. The initial reaction - putting share prices and the pound up, but gilts prices down - seems perfectly logical, as it always does at the time.

Most of the editorials in the newspapers were broadly favourable to what Mr Brown has done. But then it is clear that nobody really knows what the long-term consequences of ending the tax credit on dividends for pension funds and the parallel changes in corporation tax will be.

It is not that there are any shortages of calculations about what the theoretical consequences should be. If you assume that tax-exempt institutions account for around a third of the market, then cutting their future expected income flows by 20 per cent implies that the value of the market should fall by the order of 7 per cent. The fall in corporation tax acts

in the other direction by increasing the potential value of all companies that pay it. But, of course, it is nothing like as simple as that.

How will the pension funds change their investment habits now that the bias in favour of dividends has been removed? How far will the surpluses that exist at the moment in many pension funds offset the need for companies to make extra contributions? And what difference will the change in the corporation tax rate make to companies' distribution policy?

Most of these questions cannot yet be answered for the simple reason that they are unknowable. They depend on behavioural responses as much as static point-in-time analysis. It highlights the fundamental flaw in the whole panoply of classical economic analysis, which assumes that the world is always moving from one state of equilibrium to another, rather than reflecting the reality of a world which is in constant, dynamic flux.

That is the world, for better or worse, in which we have to live. As it happens, I spoke to three well-known investment managers this week, who between them manage several hundreds of millions of other people's money, and they all said they did not yet know what impact the

Budget would have in the longer term. They genuinely did not know.

One reason is that Budgets generally achieve much less than we all assume. Leaving aside the ACT changes for a moment, the actual changes in the overall tax burden announced by Mr Brown are very small beer measured against an economy the size of ours. That, paradoxically, is why the pound has been rising.

The implication is that, as the Chancellor has done so little to restrain consumer demand with tax increases, the Bank of England will have to take on the job by putting up interest rates.

That in turn should be good for gilts and not so good for shares. Yet the market reaction has been to say that we can have a strong pound, a strong stock market and rising gilts yields. Does that really add up? Not really. My view is that the market is still mildly overvalued and that the strength of the pound is not helpful. The big positive is that long-term bond yields are still falling, which means investors believe the Labour government is not a serious long-term threat to inflation. But then if you want rational responses in Budget week, the stock market is not the place to go and look.

arket.

Banks are starting to help new graduates. By Rachel Fixsen

What is the world coming to? You spend three years studying, expecting to triumph as one of the country's higher earners. Instead you find yourself up to your ears in debt without so much as two pence to rub together.

For new graduates, getting back on your feet financially can be as tough as sitting your finals. Grants now have to be topped up with student loans, and, as if to add insult to injury, graduates often find themselves saddled with bank overdrafts too.

Debts owed by recent graduates averaged £3,203, according to a Barclays survey last year. Student loans are smaller in the last year of a degree course, because they do not cover the vacation. But this is just the time when many people face new costs and still have no salary coming in.

"The major problem is if you're relocating, you've got to get money for a deposit and it all starts adding up," says Liz Vaughan-Adams, who graduated from the University of Kent at Canterbury last summer. She had to find £500 for a deposit on a flat.

Banks now seem more aware of the money problems many new graduates face, and offer some cheap short-term financing deals. "We are keen for students to stay with us because a lot of them will be the high earners of the future," says NatWest spokesman Guy Bellamy.

Marketing minds at banks seem to have worked out that students are not to be wooed only at the start of their courses but when they come to an end too.

Midland comes top for generosity, offering an interest-free overdraft of £1,500 in the first year after graduation. This then falls to £1,000 in the second year and £500 in the third.

Overdrafts above these levels, providing the bank has authorised them, are charged interest at a rate of 8.3 per cent APR. Up to £10,000 is available as a

graduate loan for five years at 9.9 per cent APR.

Barclays has polished up its graduate deal this year. Overdrafts are now interest-free up to £1,500 for the first six months after graduation, with £100 available interest-free for the next 18 months. Additional authorised overdrafts are charged at 7.2 per cent APR. Lloyds will let graduates go £700 overdrawn before charging interest, reducing this to £350 in the second year after college ends.

For graduate loans, NatWest offers the cheapest. It charges 8.2 per cent APR for up to £10,000 which can be borrowed for seven years. It offers a £1,000 overdraft interest-free for six months.

If you need some breathing space, some banks will let you delay paying back a graduate loan. The Royal Bank of Scotland gives you the longest payment holiday. Payments on a loan of up to £5,000 can be deferred for up to nine months. Interest is currently charged at 8.75 per cent APR.

Lloyds Bank offers graduates personal loans of up to £5,000 at 8.9 per cent interest, and there is an option to take a four-month payment holiday on this. Barclays

lets you defer graduate loan payments for three months, and charges 9.9 per cent APR. Some banks say you must either be in work or have a firm job offer in order to get a graduate loan.

Banks offer new graduates various other perks, such as fee-free credit cards, commission-free travellers' cheques and foreign currency.

But it's not the banks that give new graduates the headaches, the National Union of Students says. The student loans system is often the culprit. On the whole banks tend to treat ex-students fairly, an NUS spokeswoman says.

"Students are quite wily... where there are problems people will switch accounts if they're not getting the service they want," she says.

Bank overdrafts can be turned into graduate loans at quite competitive rates, and banks go through budgeting with their customers, she says, but student loans are repaid at a flat rate over five years. "We feel it's really not a very flexible system. If you're repaying £50 a month on top of repaying your overdraft and other borrowings, that is quite a lot out of your salary if it's only £15,500 a year."

Students can borrow up to around £2,000 a year under the student loans scheme, depending on the limit set for that particular academic year. The loans do not carry interest as such, but the amount outstanding increases in line with inflation. Graduates are not asked to start repaying their loans until the April after the course finishes, and then only if their income is 85 per cent of national average earnings - about £15,200 at the moment.

New expenses you are likely to face after graduation include a deposit for a flat, and rent in advance, increased travel costs and the bill for a new wardrobe.

Debt is increasingly a fact of life for new graduates. Students starting a three-year college course this year will probably owe around £8,000 by the time they graduate, with three-quarters of this in the form of a student loan, she says.

Banks are at pains to point out how flexible they can be on graduate financing packages. And one thing they agree on is that new graduates in financial difficulty should keep them informed. "Don't just bury your head in the sand. Come and see us," says Royal Bank of Scotland.



Degrees of debt

Premiums can be sickeningly high

Income protection policies: the benefits vary widely, reports John Chapman

Imagine being struck down by some long-term sickness or continuing disability, which prevented you from working. Your company, if you are not self-employed, might support you for six or even 12 months. But what then? Are you condemned to a life of poverty living off a state benefit of around £70 a week?

Happily, there is a way out. More than 50 insurance companies are prepared to pay substantial proportions of your income, less state benefits, provided you have taken out permanent health insurance (PHI). Around 2.5 million people are protected by such policies, 60 per cent through group policies and 40 per cent individually. Most claims are linked to back, circulatory or mental problems.

Yet, despite their basic merits, sales actually fell from 160,000 in 1991 to 117,000 in 1995. A 10 per cent increase has been reported for 1996. But sales are still at relatively low levels. Why?

A substantial reason is the complexity of the product, and the variations available. Some products have investment elements, while others provide protection only. Premiums may be automatically renewable or subject to review. Benefits are generally set at a particular percentage of income, but may also vary with levels of income.

Conditions necessary to trigger benefits may be a total disability to follow one's occupation, though some policies introduce the concept of following "any reasonably suitable occupation". In addition, there are some 20 other conditions (deferred periods, income escalation rates, spells of unemployment and others), where terms vary between companies.

Such complexity makes it very difficult to choose between policies on offer. Indeed, in its July 1996 report on health insurance, the Office of Fair Trading called for a "benchmark product" to be drawn up by the industry, but there are few signs of this happening.

Do PHI products provide value for money? Earlier this year, a report by Tania Burchard of the London School of Economics compared estimated

actuarial premiums based on invalidity benefit data with the typical premiums in PHI policies. She concluded: "PHI might be appropriate for the better-paid self-employed, or employees who do not get long-term sick pay, for whom state benefits would not offer a good level of income replacement. However, current premiums do not appear to offer good value for money for the younger age groups." She added that it was difficult to assess the benefits for older people.

This conclusion might have been even more negative if account had been taken of the "over-insuring" revealed in the OFT report. One re-insurer revealed "perhaps 30 to 40 per cent of PHI claimants have their insured benefits reduced by some degree".

Over-insuring arises because premiums are related to expected incomes, while benefits are related to actual incomes at time of claim. Uncertainty about future income may be greatest among the self-employed. Furthermore, many policies have built in annual increases of, say, 5 per cent in premiums, and actual incomes may not rise so fast. But if actual incomes exceed expected incomes benefits are not increased.

What is the industry doing about it? As the OFT report indicated, if 35 per cent of the estimated 1 million individual holders of PHI were paying premiums of £300 a year, of which £75 was in over-insurance, then some £25m a year may be paid in "wasted premiums".

One company at least now goes some way to what is needed. Permanent Insurance's new Flexi Protector policy allows clients to review their cover annually. If over-insurance is revealed when a client claims, Permanent will also refund excess premiums.

Overall, income replacement insurance appears like a good idea spoiled. Those holding PHI policies should check whether they have been over-insuring, and, if so, ask for refunds. That might stimulate the companies to offer a more honest product.

John Chapman, a former OFT official, helped prepare the report referred to above



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SCOTTISH WIDOWS

Retir

The Iron Chancellor, or "Flash Gordon", as he will be known after his £30m tax gift to the film industry, has given Labour's first Budget for 18 years. What should we make of it?

A combination of minor relief tinged with some frustration. Let's take relief as the first reaction, both figuratively and literally. Speculation, encouraged by the Treasury, had centred on the possibility that Gordon Brown might abolish mortgage interest relief at source (Miras).

Miras, at 15 per cent, is worth about £34 a month on interest-only home loans of more than £30,000. By cutting it to 10 per cent from April, the Chancellor has limited the hit to £10 a month.

Similarly, his move to raise stamp duty to 1.5 per cent on property purchases above £250,000, rising to 2 per cent for properties above £500,000, avoids punishing buyers in the south of England.

Paradoxically, however, the fact that his measures to cool the housing market have turned out far less stringent than expected raises the near-certainty of further pain for borrowers, with mortgage rates likely to go up by up to 0.75 per cent in coming months.

A rise on that scale could add at least £30 to the cost of a typical £50,000 loan. For existing and new borrowers, the logical step must be to seek haven in a fixed-rate or discounted product until the storm ahead has passed.

There will be some surprise at the Treasury's decision not to bring Inheritance Tax exemptions down from their £215,000 ceiling. Equally, this is an area where no more concessions are likely from this Government.

The frustration is mostly linked to Mr Brown's move to abolish tax credits for pension schemes.

Again, this announcement came as no surprise. Yet the effect on certain pension schemes will be heavy.

Forget, briefly, final-salary company occupational schemes. Despite some estimates suggesting an increase of between 2 and 3 per cent in payroll costs, this is by no means certain.

Research by Johnstone Douglas, a leading employee benefit consultant, suggests

the effect will be far more muted, largely because UK pension schemes do not invest in UK equities alone, but also gilts and international equities. Also, the reduction in corporation tax

to 31 per cent will offset the loss in tax credits. The additional cost will be of a more manageable 0.5 per cent, the company predicts. Yet this is not the whole picture. For 9 million people with personal pensions, plus several million more who are



loose
change

Skipton Building Society is launching a Base Rate

Tracker account which is guaranteed to match Bank of England base rates until 31 December 1999. Minimum investment is £5,000. Call 0800 446776.

Saga is launching a five-year Guaranteed Income Bond for people over 50, paying 6.45 per cent net on investments over £10,000. Cal 0800 300555 ext 197.

Barclayloan, the lending arm of Barclays Bank, is offering every applicant for one of its loans the chance to win one of 20 holidays worth £10,000 each. All applicants will receive £50 towards a holiday through Going Places. Unsecured loans start

members of money-purchase schemes (where there are no defined benefits and the final pension fund buys a retirement annuity), there is little or no escape. They do not benefit from the cut in corporation tax, yet their funds will lose future tax credits.

A person aged 35, hoping to retire at 60, will find he or she must set aside about 1 per cent more income each year into the pension or face a cut of up to 25 per cent in retirement income. For someone earning £30,000 a year, this means an extra £400 a year must be found. Even with tax allowances at 25 per cent, the cost will still be around £25-£30 a month to fund the same level of pension at retirement.

On the other hand, those about to buy an annuity in the next few months should find they can buy a slightly better retirement income, as gilt yields rise to reflect City views that the Budget was not strict enough and interest rates rise accordingly.

Uncertainty also affects many areas of savings, especially in the context of Mr Brown's announcement that Labour plans to introduce a new Individual Savings Account in 1999. It is not clear what form this ISA will take and whether the tax advantages of PEPs and TESSAs will be allowed to match it.

Realistically, one must assume that PEPs are on their way out over the longer term. In the short term, they are a particularly attractive option. They will retain the tax credits denied pensions for two more years. It is unlikely that existing PEP investments will be retrospectively penalised.

This means that if you have £6,000 to spare this tax year and next, PEPs are the natural place for your money. The tax difference may only be £100 or so between the PEP and a pension, but over 30 years compound growth makes a big difference.

The clampdown on so-called "protected" venture capital trusts (VCTs), in which half the invested funds were invested with banks, is welcome. VCTs were set up to encourage investment in smaller companies. Risk is part of the generous tax concessions available and it is right that this should be restored.

Finally, what can we say about the abolition of tax relief on private medical insurance (PMI) premiums for those over 60? To be expected, and in a curious way, a good thing.

The majority of health emergencies that strike older people are not generally treatable under PMI. The danger was that people were being tempted into PMI by tax incentives rather than real need. No more, thank goodness.

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Reasons



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[illegible]

Retirement plans

Tess Powell wants to sell her houses and boost her income

NAME: Tess Powell
AGE: 66
OCCUPATION: Part-time employee with the Ancient Monuments Society
PROBLEM: Tess Powell is property-rich but cash-poor. She owns a property in London valued at around £250,000 and is in the process of selling a house in Spain worth £30,000. Neither is mortgaged.



Aside from £3,500 in a savings account with Cheltenham & Gloucester, she is not a member of an employer's pension scheme and does not have any private pension arrangements, although she receives £9,000 in rental income from a studio formerly owned by her husband, now dead. Tess is looking to sell her main property and buy a smaller one near London. Together with the proceeds of her Spanish property sale, this would give her up to £140,000 to invest, depending on the exact sale and re-purchase prices.

She aims to retire in October and will need gross income from the investment of between £10,000 and £12,000 a year. Tess is risk-averse, though she may let a small proportion of her funds be held in assets where some risk is involved.

THE ADVISER: Fiona Price, managing director of Fiona Price & Partners, a firm of independent financial advisers based in London (0171-430 0366).

THE ADVICE: "We have tried to balance the need for low-risk, income-oriented investment, plus a reliable income stream and scope to increase it in future, plus tax efficiency, flexibility and ease of financial maintenance".

The first point is that the income requirement is high. Even if £140,000 is available, this will still need to generate around 7-9 per cent gross per annum.

Although higher levels of income can probably be achieved, it can only be done by taking some risks. Secondly, there would be little, if any, scope for the capital value of your investments to grow.

You will therefore need to balance the level of income you require and the cost of the property you wish to buy.

We note that the income required is in addition to the state pension and rental income and that it will be used to replace your current part-time earnings of £8,000. It may be useful to undertake a budgeting exercise to reflect the differences in costs that you have now compared with those in retirement.

Our first recommendation is to hold £10,000 in a building society notice account, in addition to your funds of £3,500 on instant access. Irish Permanent is currently offering 6.6 per cent gross on its 60-day postal account.

We recommend that you invest £8,575 with the Sun Banking Ilesia Plus, as it provides the highest fixed rates at present, plus all the money can be invested from the start. This is done by investing the maximum £3,000 immediately. The remainder is held in a parallel deposit account that 'feeds' in money over the five-year term. Interest is fixed at 7.55 per cent and the maturity value will be £12,086.

National Savings are government products which can be readily purchased through the Post Office. They are all guaranteed and there is no risk to capital. We recommend £10,000 be invested in the five-year 10th Index-linked Certificate, which will match the rate of inflation, plus an additional 2.5 per cent per annum.

The significant tax advantages of a personal pension mean it provides a better rate of return than any other investment,

given that the income available is guaranteed. The amount you invest is automatically uplifted by the tax relief of 23 per cent. You may put up to 40 per cent of your earned income into a personal pension in the current tax year. You are also permitted to 'carry forward' any unused contribution allowances from the previous six years, but may not make a total contribution in excess of your earned income for the current tax year (£4,000, assuming that you will be earning for six months only).

You may also make a contribution now and 'elect' that it was made last year, hence you can pay a further amount, equal to your 1996/97 earnings.

The contribution is paid net of basic-rate tax. This means that, say, £11,000 may be invested at the cost of £8,400. The idea would be to take the benefits of your pension immediately and convert your fund into an income. Or you can take 25 per cent of the fund as a tax-free lump sum and convert the rest to income. We recommend Standard Life as it operates a scheme geared for this type of arrangement.

We also recommend a Corporate Bond PEP, which offers the prospect of tax-efficient income in a low to medium-risk environment. The main attraction of PEPs is that dividends and interest are free from income tax and there is no tax to pay on gains. You should invest the maximum £6,000 in the Commercial Union Monthly Income Plus PEP, which has an annual yield of 7.97 per cent.

With-profits bonds offer strength and stability but with returns linked to equities and other long-term investments. Each

year bonuses are added. A terminal bonus is payable at the end, though with some companies a proportion of this is allocated each year instead. Bonuses, once added, cannot be taken away. We recommend you invest £40,000 with Prudential. Its current bonus rate is 6.25 per cent, plus terminal bonus paid from day one, which adds a further 2 per cent per annum.

High income bonds offer monthly or annual payments over five or six years. In addition, the full capital invested is returned at the end of the term so long as the stock market indices have achieved the required level of growth. We recommend that you invest £40,000 in the Safeguard Bond with GE Financial Assurance. This pays 7.68 per cent (in monthly instalments) net of basic rate tax. The stock market index would have to fall by more than 20 per cent over the term of the investment for the full capital not to be returned.

Guaranteed income bonds are a straightforward investment where the income and the capital are fully guaranteed for a set period of time. We recommend you invest £20,000 over a four-year term with Hambro Assured as it offers a competitive annual rate of 6.1 per cent.

The above strategy should ensure a net income of £7,339, equivalent to £9,531 before tax. There is also scope to provide a higher level of income in the future. In particular, no income is being drawn from the building society account, Ilesia and National Savings. Furthermore, the full income is not being drawn from the with-profits bond, all of which allows a higher income in the future."

Tax benefits: A personal pension would offer Tess Powell the best return

Reasons to be disappointed



Brian Tora

One thing seems certain - this Budget put the final nail in the coffin of old-fashioned value investing in equities

I suppose my first reaction to last Wednesday's Budget was relief. Relief that the Chancellor did not do more. My second reaction was one of disappointment. Disappointment that the Chancellor did not do more.

My relief was that savings were not hit harder. My disappointment reflected fears that savings were not hit harder. My disappointment reflected fears that inflationary pressures have not been headed off. This is where the main problem could lie.

Retail sales are very buoyant just now and could well rise further, so the absence of more radical action is regrettable. It is not just that the City likes to see a degree of fiscal prudence in a Chancellor. It is the way in which the baton has been passed so swiftly back to the Bank of England.

Few in the Square Mile would be surprised to see a half-point rise next week, with all the knock-on effects this would have. Perhaps the most serious of the added impetus it gives to sterling. The upward trend in the currency will not only damage exporters' positions further, it downgrades the value of overseas earnings for companies with extensive overseas interests.

Then there is the change to Advance Corporation Tax and Foreign Income Dividends. When FIDs were introduced, the shares of those companies able to distribute income to shareholders in this way were re-rated

upwards. We could have a subsequent downrating, particularly as these are the same companies likely to be affected by the strength of sterling.

The loss of the tax credit for pension funds is also serious. Many thought that abolition, which is what we got, would result in an immediate fall in share values. This did not happen. Perhaps part of the reason is that the measure was mitigated to some extent by a cut in Corporation Tax. But it does reduce the value of UK shares to pension funds.

Pension fund managers will be reassessing asset allocation for their portfolios. Perhaps the fact that pension funds may have to buy more gilts will help this market, which has been unsettled both by the lack of action on consumer spending and by the prospect of base rates that may peak 1 per cent or more above the levels originally forecast at the beginning of this year. Eight per cent base rates look likely and 9 per cent not impossible.

One thing seems certain - this Budget put the final nail in the coffin of old-fashioned value investing in equities. There is still a body of opinion that believes shares pay for themselves through paying out high dividends. Companies will now have to find better

ways of returning value to shareholders, although it is not beyond the wit of this Government to close any loopholes. Make no mistake, this was a socialist budget from a socialist Chancellor.

Which is why we need to think carefully about Personal Equity Plans. The tax credit will remain for them until April 1999 at least. Why put a time limit on this benefit? Maybe the idea is that Individual Savings Accounts will be more restrictive than PEPs and then provide some form of transfer mechanism, before ending the tax privileges PEPs enjoy. PEPs are and have always been an ideal tax planning vehicle for the better off. ISAs are meant to extend tax-beneficial savings schemes to a wider range of individuals.

I would counsel a little caution at present, although it is clear from the initial reaction of the market that there is enough institutional cash about to soak up any short-term selling. Much will depend upon how America behaves. Opinion is still divided between those who believe that valuation levels on Wall Street have reached ridiculous levels and optimists who consider the US economy to be in a state of virtuous perpetual motion, helping to fuel a global bull market that still has a while to run. Even though I find the height of the US market alarming, there are no particular signs of nemesis waiting in the wings.

If you need income, a Corporate Bond PEP now looks a good bet. But this may be a short-lived investment. Investment is now a global business. The real players in markets these days move money around the world with alarming ease. If they are happy with UK plc, then we should not be too worried. Let us hope Mr Brown does not get more socialist as the life of the Government progresses.

Brian Tora is chairman of the Greig Middleton investment strategy committee and can be contacted on 0171-655 4000.

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On the move: Buyers can choose from a variety of repayment methods

PHOTOGRAPH: NICHOLAS TURPIN

In the driving seat

Windfall shares, an economic recovery and falling unemployment – these three features look set to ensure that thousands of new customers are signed up by the car industry next month as the release of prestigious R-registration plates sends buyers scurrying towards showrooms.

Many of these cars are sold through loan schemes. There are two main types of deal: those offered by car manufacturers' finance companies, and those available from financial institutions. The former typically apply to new and used cars purchased via dealerships, the latter to private purchases.

The zero per cent finance deal is the best available from manufacturers. Monthly repayments are low: for the Vauxhall Corsa Merit, £173.35 a month over two years. However, to qualify, a 50 per cent deposit of £4,170 is payable.

Another option is the split deal purchase. The trend among purchasers is to replace their new car after two or three years, says David Nash, of Ford Credit, the loan arm of Ford Motor Company. Although a deposit of about 20 per cent is needed, monthly repayments are lower.

For example, the Fiesta Fusion, with an on-the-road price of £8,795, costs £135.70 a month for 24 months on the Ford Options plan after a 30 per cent deposit. Similar deals apply to GM cars. Over a three-year period on the Vauxhall Choices plan, the monthly repayments for a Corsa Merit, costing £8,340, are £141.04 plus a 20 per cent deposit.

At the end of the contract, customers can sell the car back to the dealership for

Dom la Hausse de Lalouvière looks at car loan options

a pre-arranged price: top up their deposit and drive away a new car; or buy the car for a set amount. With the Corsa Merit, it would cost £4,100 to buy the car.

Plans similar to hire purchase are also available. A deposit of about 20 per cent is again required, and the resulting monthly payments are high: about £350 for a car costing about £10,000. The advantage is that after the final monthly payment, the customer owns the car.

In all these cases, the customer does not own the car until the final payment is made. Problems can arise if the car is stolen 23 months into a 24-month contract. In effect, people might be paying for a car they are no longer in possession of.

Mr Nash says: "Manufacturers are aware of this and encourage customers to take out insurance policies which cover them in case of such an occurrence."

Policies will pay out the new value of the car. However, only about a third of people take out these insurance policies, he adds.

Personal loans are the standard way of buying cars. While the customer owns the car from the outset and no deposit is payable, repayments are high. For example, monthly repayments on a £10,000 personal loan (with protection) over

three years from Lloyds Bank are £376.97 at 13.8 per cent APR.

Under the Consumer Credit Act of 1974, financial institutions can charge redemption penalties. If customers want to pay their loans off early, many banks make them pay a penalty. This can be two months' interest, in the case of Mercantile Credit, or one month if the loan is with National Westminster Bank.

Interest payments, as with mortgages, are not a fixed amount. At the start of the loan, the customer's monthly payments make up a higher proportion of interest than of loan repayment. Towards the end of the loan this is reversed. It is thus more expensive to pay a three-year loan off after 12 months than after 24 months.

With Mercantile Credit, the redemption penalty on a £10,000 loan taken out over three years is £176.14 after 12 months and £82.19 after 24 months. Some banks, including Lloyds and Bank of Scotland Banking Direct, do not charge redemption penalties on unsecured personal loans.

Bank of Scotland has recently introduced a flexible car loan. This is a hybrid of contract purchase schemes linked to manufacturers and standard loans. No deposit is payable and the customer owns the car from the outset while interest rates are up to 5 percentage points lower than with car dealerships.

Useful publications: July's edition of 'What Car' magazine. 'Moneyfacts', a financial information provider, can provide details of all loans available on the market. Call 01692 500765 for a subscription.

Best borrowing rates									
Telephone number	Account	Interest rate	Deposit	Rate	Interest	Rate	Interest	Rate	Interest
FIXED RATES									
Standard Bank	0800 133145	2.95 for 1 year	5	0.75%					
Northern Rock	0181 256 600	4.99 to 1/10/97	5	2.25%					
Northern Rock	0800 591500	7.19 to 1/10/97	50	2.25%					
VARIABLE RATES									
Standard Bank	0800 133145	4.25 for 2 years	5	0.75%					
Northern Rock	0800 591500	5.49 for 2 years	5	0.75%					
Northern Rock	0800 591500	5.49 for 2 years	5	0.75%					
FIRST TIME BUYERS FIXED RATES									
Northern Rock	0800 591500	4.99 to 1/10/97	50	2.25%					
Northern Rock	0800 591500	5.49 to 1/10/97	50	2.25%					
FIRST TIME BUYERS VARIABLE RATES									
Northern Rock	0800 591500	5.49 to 1/10/97	50	2.25%					
Northern Rock	0800 591500	5.49 to 1/10/97	50	2.25%					

Best savings rates									
Telephone number	Account	Interest rate	Deposit	Rate	Interest	Rate	Interest	Rate	Interest
FIXED RATES									
Standard Bank	0800 133145	Instant Access	Instant	5.15	Year				
Northern Rock	0800 591500	Instant Access	Instant	5.15	Year				
Northern Rock	0800 591500	Instant Access	Instant	5.15	Year				
VARIABLE RATES									
Standard Bank	0800 133145	Instant Access	Instant	5.15	Year				
Northern Rock	0800 591500	Instant Access	Instant	5.15	Year				
Northern Rock	0800 591500	Instant Access	Instant	5.15	Year				

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So now we know – Gordon Brown really does stand for change and modernisation in the tax system. Not content with moving the Budget day to a Wednesday, he has also dispensed with the venerable Budget Box, first used by Gladstone. While Gladstone managed to get a four-hour-plus speech into the old box, the new Chancellor found a slightly bigger box more appropriate to the A4 pages of his one-hour speech. So what are the messages from the Budget?

Clearly what Mr Brown will want us to remember is the windfall tax and how it is being spent. But the blocking of the ACT tax credit for pension funds when they receive dividends is really a more far-reaching measure and will touch many people, albeit indirectly.

After all, most of us contribute to a pensions scheme or are drawing on one. Now the fund that we relate to has lower income. That may lead to demand for higher contributions: if it is a company scheme, then at least the company has a lower corporation tax rate to soften the blow. But for those with personal pensions, there will be a more direct impact.

This blocking of the tax credit repayment has wider ramifications as well, or it will do. The credit is available to individuals to set against their tax bills, or generate a repayment if they do not have a bill to pay, and charities can also claim the tax credit in cash. At the moment, none of these (PEPs included) are affected.

But in April 1999, things will change. The tax credit reduces to one-ninth of the cash dividend, instead of the current one-quarter. Individual recipients won't notice a difference, as they will only be asked for the same amount of cash tax as now (which is nil if they are other than a higher-rate taxpayer, of course).

Those who do not pay tax – children or those on low incomes for example – will get a lower repayment. PEPs and charities will also get less, though the charities' reduction is being phased in over five years. Overseas

investors, who in many cases get an ACT rebate, will lose most, if not all, of their entitlement.

Perhaps what these 1999 amendments are meant to do is to push us towards the planned Individual Saving Accounts (ISAs). These sound as if they will be able to invest in anything and will be welcomed. But we will have to wait until next year for details. While there wasn't the cap on PEP investment that many had expected, there is something of a signal that PEPs may be on the wane, with the ISA offering better tax recovery and thus better returns.

Tax-advantaged investments are always vulnerable to changes of mind by successive chancellors. Venture Capital Trusts and Enterprise Investment Scheme companies offer 20 per cent income tax relief for investments: these were feared to be on Mr Brown's hit list.

But they survived, though with a tweaking to target them more closely to risk-taking. We can expect to see fewer asset-backed, guaranteed-return type of schemes in the future: you really will have to put your money at risk to help a new or expanding business rather than into a safe investment if you want the relief.

Here we get on to what I see as one of the themes of the Budget that I will remember: the Dog That Didn't Bark in the Night (see the Sherlock Holmes story *Silver Blaze* if you've never come across that analogy before). There were many things floated, threatened or even expected that didn't happen – or happened less painfully than anticipated. Sure, Miras was cut, but we could look at it as a 10 per cent relief saved rather than

Many things that were floated or threatened didn't happen in the Budget

five per cent lost. We didn't see any changes to inheritance tax – all the reliefs are still there. Capital gains reinvestment and retirement reliefs survive intact. Those who are resident here, but not domiciled, and those who are trying to leave to avoid a tax bill, can breathe easily again. Trusts can soldier on. No changes to National Insurance, nor – medical cover for the elderly and

Miras apart – to income tax. In fact, an awful lot of the things that I have been writing about in this series of columns were unaffected. Many of the things that escaped attention this time could well turn up next spring, which is when we are assured the next Budget will be – presumably back to the traditional March timing. Perhaps there is a streak of soft traditionalism in this new Iron Chancellor that we see before us. We'll have to wait and see. For part of this time I'll be taking a break from this column and, among other things, moving house. I, for one, was fortunate enough to get things in motion before the increased stamp duty hit, even if a certain ex-resident of Islington didn't.

John Whiting is a tax partner at Price Waterhouse

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£25,000-£49,999	6.25%
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Sunflowers, saints' bones and Spice Girls CDs

"Well, he was a nutter, wasn't he; chopped his ear off and then topped himself. Still, if you like that sort of thing, put one in a nice frame and it's better than a blank wall. It's a free country. But what's crazy is paying millions for the real thing when with modern technology you can copy all the bumps in 3D; you'd need to be a rocket scientist to tell the difference. And then - this is the really funny bit - hundreds of them turn out to be fakes anyway and that Japanese company that paid £25m for Sunflowers finds it's got some worthless bit of canvas daubed by Van Gogh's doctor."

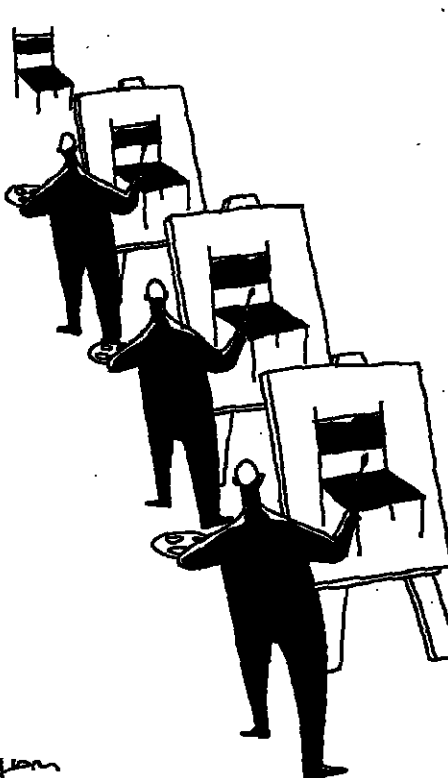
There is something true in the rant of the caricature Philistine (although, to be historically accurate, it is an insult to Philistines to tar them with the brush of modern British anti-intellectualism). There is indeed something strange about the valuation of works of art, but the strangeness is much more interesting than the boorish utilitarian will allow. Art fakery is one of those subjects, like gruesome murders and the sexual proclivities of vicars, that seems to hold an endless fascination for people. But what would it mean if more than a hundred paintings and drawings attributed to Vincent Van Gogh were actually fakes? Certainly it would mean some Japanese investors would suddenly find themselves several billion yen poorer.

But would it mean that Van Gogh was a

lesser artist than we thought - ho, ho, anyone can do them? Of course not: a faker is simply manipulating the creative ideas and techniques of a greater human. Van Gogh changed the way we see; but the moment his vision had been realised, it was possible to copy it and mimic it. More than that, it was inevitable that it would influence art that followed it. That was its power.

But this brings us back to the question of authenticity. Why should a painting of sunflowers by Van Gogh be worth, say, a thousand times more than a very similar-looking painting that turns out not to be Van Gogh - and a million times more than a very hand-somely produced reproduction? This is beyond reason, but not because it's silly. Valuing the authentic works of genius is a human instinct that is strongly related to the cherishing of religious trophies in earlier ages. Dr Gacher's Garden is, in part, for us what the tomb of St Thomas was for a 14th-century merchant - a physical link with the sublime, or miraculous. Mankind has long yearned for the touch of genius, to have bodily connection with something greater than ourselves.

Once, that was largely a religious connection, though there were always collectors for the great works of antiquity. Today, though, many of us worship the purest or bravest expressions of human creativity instead. And indeed, the reason why so many people want,



and so few can afford, to own the actual bits of canvas on which great artists painted is not so far from the reason why other people want to own Princess Diana's dresses. It is the primitive impulse that drives the autograph hunter, that lights up the faces of the voter who says he won't ever wash his hand after shaking Tony Blair's. It is in the teenage scream of "I touched him!" when the hem of a pop idol has been felt. Its magic is in dubious grey lumps sold as moon rock, or bits of Berlin Wall, or relics.

Now part of that, of course, is merely about scarcity and market value: art works are also valued because they have a rarity that can be compared to gold. They are useful price-fixers. And at a lower level, signed books are rarer than unsigned ones and therefore, perhaps, a little more valuable. But when it comes to art we are talking about quasi-religion, not simply the market. Look at the formulaic reverence in the dazed faces of pilgrims filing past the Mona Lisa in the Louvre. Like any human impulse, it can be exploited for commercial gain - there is not much difference between the sale of papal indulgences in the 16th century and of individually signed Hockney prints in the 20th. Yesterday we reported that George Michael, along with Inspiral Carpets, Skunk Anansie, the Boo Radleys and Bryan Ferry had complained that record companies were putting out all manner of remixed efforts under their names and debasing their artistic integrity. The

same thing again: authenticity worshipped, then exploited. This is only a trivial example of the observation that the third-rate works of first-rate artists are worth more than the occasional great works of lesser names.

But simply because valuations are irrational does not make them wrong. Reaching out and touching what awes us is an essential part of being human; so, in the age of the market, it is tradeable. For metropolitan sophisticates, their irrationalism is dressed up as Art with a capital A, swooning over paintings they don't understand, or really like, while they patronise the superstitions of so-called "ordinary" people - the yearning to meet a Royal, or possess a signed Spice Girls CD. It is easy for confident, well-connected people to sneer at the desire to touch and collect. But it is not fundamentally different from the impulse that values a Van Gogh so highly, or treasures those few meaningless words exchanged with a Pavarotti or a Mandela. In both cases, it is touch and authenticity that matter.

It was not rational for medieval travellers to bring back bits of bones from the Middle East, and it was not rational to build incredible structures - both the stories and the huge stone-work cathedrals - over them. It is equally irrational to build huge monetary values around paintings that have become familiar and are endlessly reproduced. But rip out that irrationalism and you rip out our very essence.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Back-room deals are no way to organise an election debate

Sir: Your recent articles and correspondence about the 1997 election debate fiasco suggest that the broadcasters and politicians must act sooner to arrive at a mutually acceptable deal before the next general election. This raises a significant point: if the public is to benefit from serious, democratic, inclusive televised political debates, then the process of organising them must itself be publicly accountable and seen to be more than merely a back-room deal between ratings-conscious TV executives and political strategists seeking target votes.

In the 1997 debate negotiations the political parties never once met in the same room, around one table, to discuss the proposals from the broadcasters. Each of the

debate franchise negotiated separately and secretly with each of the party strategists. This was immensely inefficient in the midst of a six-week national election campaign. It had about it the unaccountable feel of pre-1950s broadcasting deals between the BBC and the favoured politicians. And, given that it was promoted as a means of enhancing the democratic process, it lacked any accountability to the public, who overwhelmingly wanted a debate but found themselves in the role of onlookers at the fabled court, told only after the event of mysterious rival accounts of why the debate did not happen.

For this reason, we agree strongly with Lord Holmes and Adam Boulton (Letters, 3 July) that future debates must be organised under an

independent aegis. To this end, we shall be launching an independent working party on televised political debates at this summer's Edinburgh Television Festival. Our working party will take evidence from broadcasters, the political parties and the public and will produce questions and proposals to be discussed at a subsequent conference. It may be that the next step will be the establishment of an independent commission to organise future televised debates (similar in intent to the US Commission on Presidential Debates).

This issue goes deeper than the failure to negotiate a Blair-Major-Ashdown showdown during the 1997 general election. Democratic politics needs an abundance of good, open, reasoned debate; without it the

political process rapidly degenerates into an exchange of advertising slogans. Televised debates are not simply about creating TV spectacles at election-time. In the coming years there will be several important referendums; there will be the 1999 European elections; there will be a government with a huge majority and a democratic duty to be seen in public discussion with other parties and, through interactive technology, with the public. Television remains the obvious public forum for such debate.

STEPHEN COLEMAN
Director, Hansard Society Scholars Programme
JULIE HALL
Editor, People's Election Project, Channel 4
London NW3

Bitter battle of the towpath

Sir: So the cyclists are complaining that they are to be charged the stupendous sum of £12.50 per annum for using the towpath of the Kennet and Avon Canal (report, 30 June). As a walker, I welcome it.

I would point out to the cyclists that in the days when the Kennet and Avon was a series of muddy puddles, with here and there a patch of navigable waterway, it was very largely walkers who kept the path open. It was also a safe place for small children to learn to ride a bicycle. Now those same walkers are being driven from the path by the antics of some cyclists, and children on two wheels are no longer safe there.

Remonstrations with the new "kings of the towpath" are regarded as politically incorrect, and anyway will be met with a mouthful of abuse. I speak from experience. The mass trespass threatened by the cyclists is nothing new. In the days when a licence was required (and if my memory serves correctly it was not £3 but £1) it was ignored, and notices reminding users about it were defaced. The long-term future of this canal is still in the balance. Nearly all other users of it are keen to help. Why are cyclists the exception?

KIRSTEN ELLIOTT
Bath

A Canaletto for Westminster Abbey

Sir: Some of your readers will be aware that on 9 July Sotheby's is auctioning a Canaletto of the interior of the Henry VII Chapel at Westminster Abbey. Many of us who have connections with the Abbey feel that it would be wonderful if the painting could be acquired by the Dean and Chapter and placed on public display.

We recall that in October 1995 the Abbey celebrated the completion of the magnificent restoration carried out over a period of 22 years. Obviously, and quite correctly, the Dean and Chapter could not call on reserves or make a further appeal to their generous benefactors for the purchase of a picture. However, should there be a potential benefactor who wished to buy the picture and donate it to the Abbey, I am sure that the whole nation would be grateful.

DAVID BOEHM
Lower Slaughter, Gloucestershire

Disaster waiting to happen in space

Sir: The near-disaster at the Mir space station has highlighted the risks of collisions in space. The mother of all space accidents is just waiting to happen later this year.

On 6 October the Cassini space probe will be shooting off into space with 72.3lb of plutonium compounds on board. Cassini's mission is to explore Saturn and its moons. Rather than heading straight to Saturn though, Cassini will fly twice around Venus and back to Earth in what NASA calls a "slingshot manoeuvre". This is to maximise the use of the Earth's gravity to increase Cassini's velocity.

If all goes well, it will pass just 320 miles above Earth. Too deep a descent, though, and Cassini could disintegrate in the Earth's atmosphere. Even NASA's own research says that five billion people could be contaminated if the plutonium comes raining down on to Earth. Thousands could die from lung cancer after inhaling plutonium dust.

JOHN BRIERLEY
Yorkshire CND
Bradford

LETTER from THE EDITOR

The most intelligent and humane response to the Drumcree stand-off is one I first came across in an article by Maurice Hayes, the former Northern Ireland civil servant, in *The Irish Independent*. He argued that both communities should assert and recognise the rights of the other, in return for which these rights would not be exercised: in particular, the rights of the Orangemen to march would be conceded - and then they wouldn't march. It is an idea of uncommon sense, and, whatever finally happens this weekend, has at least been taken seriously by a Grand Master or so.

At first sight, the Hayes idea bears a resemblance to a satirical plan hatched, I think, by the father of the scientist Magnus Pyke, while he was working for a wartime ministry in Whitehall. There was a great debate raging about how to conserve precious and scarce aviation fuel; the civil servant suggested that an agreement be reached whereby the RAF would take off each evening and bomb London, in return for which the Luftwaffe would bomb Berlin. The net effect, he suggested, would be similar and the fuel saving impressive.

More immediately, I am haunted by the suspicion that the most useful way to defuse Drumcree would be for the media - every camera crew, reporter, radio van, photographer and commentator - to pack up and leave. It is hard to back down: it is harder still to do live on videotape. So why doesn't *The Independent* take a lead? Because readers would be angered if this were the only paper that didn't report a major Northern Irish event. For journalists to decamp is a naive dream, the kind of thing that would happen at the end of a James Stewart film. We are all complicit, though.

Re the Hong Kong coverage, several readers have asked why we continue to use "Peking" rather than "Beijing". I had no idea: Andy Marshall, our foreign editor, explains that, given the

difficulty of transliterating from ideograms into Western script, neither usage is inherently correct or incorrect - indeed, Peking is used a lot in Hong Kong. The difference is that the Chinese government "requires" us to use Beijing, and Mr Marshall doesn't see why we should be required by them to do anything of the kind. Quite so. Foreign place-names should be a compromise between accuracy and familiarity: Firenze (Florence) and Damasco (Damascus) are lost causes in London and Edinburgh.

We had a good response when we used Chinese characters to say "Goodbye Hong Kong"

I am haunted by the suspicion that the most useful way to defuse Drumcree would be for the media to pack up and leave

on the front of Tuesday's paper. But, as readers have been kind enough to point out, we have in the past got it wrong when breaking into Arabic, Swahili and even, occasionally, French. So this time great care was taken in obtaining advice from various Cantonese friends of the paper. I knew that. But the night didn't end, when at around 11.30pm a Mr Wong phoned in to say that he had just picked up a copy of *The Independent* at Euston station and, while he was naturally pleased to see the use of Chinese script, he would be most interested to know why we had chosen to lead with the words, "Dying Flee's Pigs & Sheep." In this office, at that time of night, it was not easy to check. As Mr Marshall said, "it was instantly and completely plausible". Mayhem followed. Whoever you are, "Mr Wong", this is just to let you know that it worked.

Andrew Marr

QUOTE UNQUOTE

I haven't seen a PLA soldier shoot anyone all day - Jethro Lee-Mahoney, manager of the 104-year-old Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club. My advice is to quit while you are behind - Tony Blair, Prime Minister, to William Hague, Leader of the Opposition, after the Budget. To stop people bugging badgers, and to stop people badgering buggers - Lord Arran, who piloted the homosexual reform Bill through the Lords in 1967, stating his objectives in life. The thing I dread is getting on a bit and walking up and down Wardour Street, trying to collar people and saying "I'm sure I've got one more film left in me" - Sir David Patman, film director. We alone seem determined to see our own time of greatness as subject for no more than guilt or at best the ghostly joke-patriotism of the Last Night of the Proms - John Casey, Fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, on the demise of the British Empire. I'm not bitter... I am perplexed more than anything else - Neil Hamilton, former minister, on the damning Downey report. I am perplexed that Mr Hamilton is perplexed... it is a very perplexing perplexity - Martin Bell, who stood against Mr Hamilton as an anti-sleaze candidate in the General Election and won. How dare anyone criticise Diana for taking up this heart-rending cause? Diana's stand deserves the utmost praise - Clare Short, Cabinet minister, on Diana, Princess of Wales's anti-land mine campaign.

Read the Budget small print

Sir: Your comments on the "people's Budget" (3 July) echo the current mood of optimism. There are indeed positive features to the Budget - notably the work programme - which my party also applauds. But we have not lost our critical faculties.

Your leading article suggests you may not have read the small print on additional education and health spending. It is for the next financial year, not this, and will not, as you hope, ease the immediate funding problem in schools and hospitals. You have forgotten inflation. The upward revision in inflation from 2 per cent to 2.75 per cent alone raises the cost of health and education this year by £320m and £300m respectively, for which there is no additional provision. This additional inflation will account for over half the extra spending pledged next year. It is difficult to believe that even the Conservatives would have done any less.

You airily dismiss the Liberal Democrats' spending proposals as "a mite by-the-by" though the annual yield from one penny in the pound on income tax is considerably in excess of the *ad hoc* additional allocation Gordon Brown is offering. We believe moreover that the public would support the idea of a modest increase in direct taxation to pay for education if the Government would have the courage to pose the problem in that way.

Outside health and education there are real cuts in store. And local authority budgets are still capped, despite the need to top up pension funds following the loss of tax credit on ACT. Those people who looked to the Chancellor to deliver better services may not be euphoric for very long.

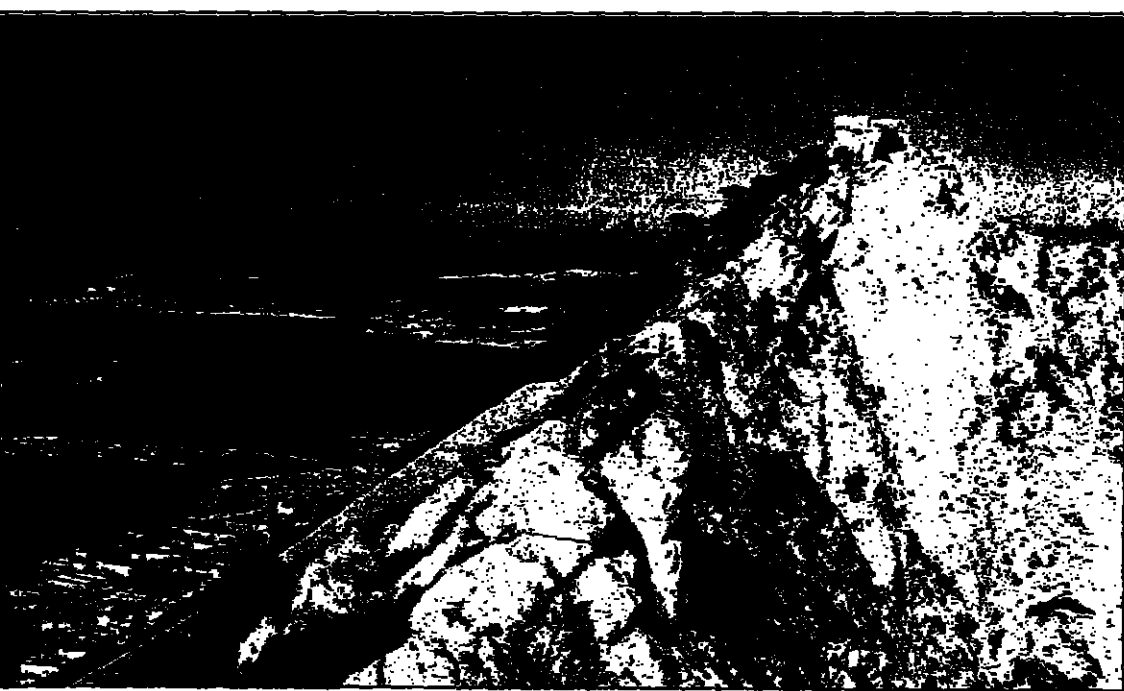
VINCENT CABLE MP
(Twickenham, Lib Dem)
Liberal Democrat Financial Spokesman
House of Commons
London SW1

Endless apologies

Sir: With reference to Mr Blair's "apology for the potato famine" Andrew Brown (Essay, 2 July) asks "Why not apologise for Cromwell. Or for Henry II?"

Why draw the line there? Henry II's action in Ireland arose from the fact that at Henry's coronation in 1155, Pope Adrian IV granted and donated Ireland to the illustrious King of England, Henry, to be held by him and his successors. Perhaps, in this "Year of the Apology" we might even now get the Vatican expressing formal regret for having initiated the Irish Problem.

AUSTIN PIELOU
Taunton,
Somerset



Stumbling block: the Rock of Gibraltar is souring relations between the UK and Spain

Now for the next redundant remnant of empire

Sir: Now that the Hong Kong handover is behind us let us clear away another anomaly of our erstwhile Empire. I refer to the ludicrous situation of a piece of limestone at the western end of the Mediterranean - yes, Gibraltar. The place has been a smugglers' haven and a day-trippers' paradise, displaying the worst traits of its principal beggars, the Spanish and English.

The population of 30,000 having had the best of both worlds, certainly

for the past 40 years, demand their right to remain British (whatever that may mean in an EU context). Gibraltar considers it is part of the EU, by association with the UK, yet it imposes no VAT and does not feel it can co-operate with its neighbouring EU member, Spain, over common-sense matters like sharing the facilities of its UK-built airport. It can never be viable on its own and in its *de facto* autonomous state remains an irritant to the UK, to Spain and even to the EU.

In the new political atmosphere prevailing since 1 May, let Whitehall make it clear that the present impasse, which is souring relations between the UK and Spain, can no longer be sustained. I would suggest a 30-year period of adjustment such as Hong Kong will have, but with either Britain and Spain sharing responsibility or, better still, under the auspices of the EU. Let the ghosts of history rest in peace.

CLIVE CUNNINGHAM
Brenford, Middlesex

Throw-away plastic dome bodes ill for a green millennium

Sir: Andrew Marr is right in saying that any millennium event should have a great purpose and be forward looking ("Under the Dome: a serious proposal", 2 July). As he says, a truly environmental festival would achieve that.

But the proposed Greenwich Dome is about as far from an acceptable setting for an environmental exhibition as it's possible to get (short of siting the whole thing at Sellafield). Despite Tony Blair saying he wants the

Millennium Dome "to leave a lasting legacy", and the Millennium Commission saying it is "inconceivable that the Dome will be demolished", the fact is that this is a temporary, throw-away, plastic structure. The Dome is going to be made of PVC-coated polyester. PVC is being banned or phased out in many European countries, and has been found to be justifiably described as an "environmental poison" by the Austrian Supreme Court.

A PVC Dome represents

everything an environmental exhibition would be challenging. This disposable, but not reusable or recyclable Dome of Doom, a source of dioxins in its manufacture and disposal, polluting past. It would make a laughing-stock not only of any environmental exhibition, but of the whole country.

PETER MELCHETT
Executive Director
Greenepeace
London N1

Don't blame probation for criminals prison has failed to reform

Sir: The blame for probationers committing a "murder a week" (report, 2 July) cannot be placed entirely at the door of the probation service.

Of the probationers charged with serious offences, 90 were on parole. They had therefore gone through the

prison system without being reformed. Prisons in this country are already massively overcrowded and prison officers have little time spare to work on rehabilitation.

It would be simplistic to propose that a shift of offenders from probation to prison will solve this

problem. We need to ensure that courts sentence serious offenders to prisons with resources to rehabilitate them properly and send other offenders to the cheaper, and often more effective, probation service.

IMOGEN CATERER
Gloucester

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the saturday story

Taken for £10.5m and the kitchen sink

Sir Terence Conran's latest divorcee pay-out has given him a nasty dose of indigestion. She only cooked a few meals, he says. Glenda Cooper on the dirty dishes left over from a designer marriage

"I think it reads like a Mills & Boon novel," snorted Sir Terence Conran yesterday. He was referring to his latest divorce settlement but he could have been referring to his own life. He has been married three times, had a girlfriend half his age, changed the way we think about design, seen an empire grow and fall and grow again, with the US President and British Prime Minister choosing to dine at one of his restaurants. It is the stuff of bonkbusters at their best.

This week the latest page in the enthralling Conran saga was turned. Lady Caroline Conran, Sir Terence's third wife, has won a £10.5m divorce settlement – believed to be the largest ever in a contested divorce. It includes a lump sum of £6.2m and homes in London and Dorset.

"The figure is unbelievable," Sir Terence said yesterday. "Just because she cooked a few meals now and then and wrote a few books, I taught her how to cook."

Mr Justice Wilson thought otherwise – as did Lady Caroline herself, who had originally been seeking an £8.7m cash settlement for her part in building up Sir Terence's empire, including the Habitat chain. But "it can be difficult for a man with a healthy ego who has achieved a ver- tiginous success to look down and dis-

cern a contribution other than his own," Mr Justice Wilson remarked dryly.

Sir Terence's rude remark was typical of his ego and abrasive personality although Nicholas Ind, Sir Terence's biographer, said that he had found a man of opposites: "He was tactless and abrasive but charming and passionate, that he loved women but could also be misogynistic, and that he was ambitious but little interested in money." His son Jasper, a fashion designer, speaks of his "fear" of his domineering father, and his sister Priscilla tells how Sir Terence exploded after a Habitat meeting at which she presented new bathroom fittings. "He said, 'How dare you present something that doesn't work,' and laid into me for a quarter of an hour."

Sir Terence has had a two-decade feud with that other design guru Sir Roy Strong, which dates back to 1976 when Sir Roy described a Habitat catalogue as full of material fit only for a "Hendon semi". Conran suggested at one point that Strong should be stuffed and exhibited in a case at the V&A museum.

But while Sir Terence was busy inventing the concept of lifestyle – it is incontestable that Conran, more than any other individual, civilised our cooking and educated the ordinary English eye in design – his wives played a major role. In a recent



Sir Terence and Lady Caroline: 'I taught her how to cook,' he says

interview Sir Terence said one of his greatest regrets was that all three of his wives had left him: "I do think that if I was able to reorganise myself again I would find a way of putting more into my personal life."

His first wife few know about – she does not appear in his lengthy *Who's Who* entry. Brenda Davison, who worked briefly with Conran, was an aspiring architect married to him for five months before she left him for a previous boyfriend. Yesterday the first Mrs Conran remarked: "There's a lot of truth in what the judge says. Some men are just like small boys and need to be taught a lesson ... I do wish he'd grow up."

Sir Terence next married Shirley Ida Pearce, now the millionaire author of best-selling books such as *Superwoman* and *Lace*. She was a waitress at his coffee bar in Chelsea when they met. They married six months later and had two sons, Sebastian, an industrial designer, and Jasper, Sir Terence once said, was the only wife who ever made him angry.

Like Lady Caroline, Shirley was involved in his work running Conran Fabrics, a company that he started with her. She also persuaded him to do more publicity about their lives, with the family regularly appearing in newspapers and magazines, which

was widely credited with helping the success of his business. She divorced him after seven years when he had an affair with his secretary. The marriage ended in 1962; in 1963 he married Caroline Herbert, and a year later opened his first Habitat. In this area, the judge concluded "she was almost as full of ideas as her husband".

The chain quickly became successful, setting standards for popular design. It expanded throughout the 1970s and was floated as a plc in 1980 – a key element of Sir Terence's Storehouse conglomerate.

Lady Conran had, through her father, subscribed an eighth share in Habitat Designs at the very beginning. The Conrans discussed new ideas around their kitchen table, said the judge: "The husband ... could have hardly chosen a better wife able to contribute to their germination."

Lady Conran, an influential food journalist, also helped Conran's association with fine food to grow. Storehouse expanded, acquiring Mothercare and British Home Stores. But he was forced to step down from Storehouse in 1990 after being unable to adapt to the role of heading such a huge and varied range of businesses, employing 33,000. The move wrenched his most famous creation, Habitat, from his grasp.

"Terence's leaving Storehouse dev-

asted him," said Lady Conran. "He bounced back in a way, but I think it changed his outlook and made him pessimistic." Before that loss, his personal wealth was put at £200m. After, it crashed to around £35m.

Sir Terence, who had been knighted in the 1980s under the Tories, but endorsed Tony Blair, bounced back, opening a string of fashionable eateries under his Conran Restaurants banner. He is now thought to be worth £80m. On his 60th birthday he opened Le Pont de la Tour, where the Clintons and the Blairs recently ate as a reward for his Labour support. It was followed by Cantina del Ponte, and the Butler's Wharf Chophouse.

In 1993, when he separated from Lady Conran (he now lives with the interior designer Victoria Davis), he reopened Quaglino's and then the *San Mezzano* in Soho. His latest restaurant is Bluebird, in Chelsea. Up to 40,000 eat at his London restaurants each week; last year they took £60m.

Whether Victoria Davis has anything to do with this success we do not yet know – and we are certainly unlikely to find out what he thinks in a fourth Conran divorce settlement. After three marriages, Sir Terence now says, "Why do it again? I don't think it makes people any closer to each other."

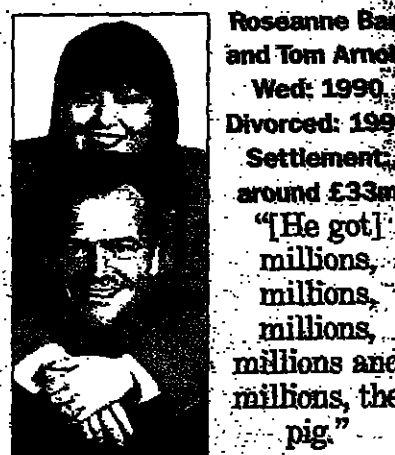
Great quotes from the bitch and famous



Donald and Ivana Trump
Wed: 1977
Divorced: 1991
Settlement: £16m
"Don't get mad – get everything"



The Prince and Princess of Wales
Wed: 1981
Divorced: 1996
Settlement: £17m
"There were three of us in the marriage – it was a bit crowded."



Roseanne Barr and Tom Arnold
Wed: 1990
Divorced: 1995
Settlement: around £33m
"[He got] millions, millions, millions and millions, the pig."



Steven Spielberg and Amy Irving
Wed: 1986
Divorced: 1989
Settlement: £73m
"The only thing that really turns him on is the movies. But for me it became a nightmare. I was depressed and disillusioned about marriage."

Research: Tupti Patel

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karen kristanovich



For yonks, cards were a fuddy-duddy's game, so dire that even Omar Sharif couldn't make them at all romantic. That's the past, babies. Bridge is now the new rock 'n' roll. All the superstars play bridge between AA meetings and there are at least four bridge-related movies in pre-production.

To be in with the in-crowd, however, you play Oh Hell!, a faster, more accessible – if more aggressive – type of bridge. OK, so it's *Idiot's Bridge*. I get the name wrong and still have fun: "Hey, let's play 'Go To Hell', er, 'Get The Hell Out'. Oh hell, you know what I mean."

You deal out 13 cards to four players. Each player bids a number and the highest bidder calls the suit. Hand by hand, a card is subtracted. The game plays down to one and back up to 13. You don't even need to wear deodorant. It's that easy.

Easy for me, anyway, because my mother made me into a card shark. I grew up in Cowtown USA, a place where poker-related shotgun deaths are not uncommon. To this day, deadly tornadoes rip through the area and cut power to hundreds of homes. Threatened by darkness and more boredom than usual, my mother would grab the oil lamps from over the butterchurn and seat herself at the dinner table. We children had two choices: play canasta with her or watch the dead television. Mum taught me well. The first time I beat my elder brother, he sprinted from the table in tears and locked himself in the loo. I still have this effect on men, with cards or without.

That's not what Hollywood makes of

cardplayers. Tinseltown's idea of exciting card games requires secret backrooms or the sleek black-lie casinos of Monte Carlo. This fits London's Best Kept Secret: the annual Cartier Oh Hell! Charity Cup evening. More difficult to get into than a catwalk and more glamorous than a royal wedding, this insider's invitation is held at Cartier's private showrooms and is hosted by the firm's UK MD, Anna Bamberger, and his Sharon-Stonely gorgeous wife, Carla.

Begun three years ago by the Bambergers, the interior designer Tessa Kennedy and the fashion designer Tomasz Starzewski, this year's tourney of Oh Hell!-ists included titled jet-setters, dressage champions and socialites – all digging into their pockets to help Starzewski take handicapped people on a pilgrimage to Lourdes. Forget Nashville and the Nun Bun, guys, it's Lourdes that still gets the big crowds.

Arriving late, as usual, at Old Bond Street, I was escorted into a casino scene from a Bond film. No Sean Connery, but, boy, close enough. Milling within walls of watered silk and baize card tables, handsome men in DJs and beauties in this minute's frock drank and chatted with smooth confidence. How

unlike my high-school barn dances! Next to their elegance, my dress was a bio-bag – a wrinkling, pre-stained, off-the-shoulder number that gave in to gravity when I exhaled. Shamed, I was saved by the first tenet of journalism: stampede for the food – heifers of salads, beef and salmon. I beelined for a trifle grand enough for the Mormon Tabernacle Choir to sing in.

Play commenced in total silence until the grinding of teeth and desperate whispers of "Shit. Why did I play that?" spread over the rooms. It was well past midnight when the high scores were tallied. The champion, Elisar Cabrera, son of Uncle's Caroline Kennedy, took home the Cartier Cup – a silver thimble the size of Red Rum's nose. Top and bottom scores received beautifully wrapped Cartier goodies. What were they? Jewels? Watches? Anvils? Well, everyone was so nice to me (except for the rat who groped my behind) that I resisted giving those boxes a good, hard, greedy shake. I'm sorry. I just couldn't be that American.

Ear. Candle. Two words which do not go together. Ever. But no. My tall, long-haired friend Brian, an Englishman turned "alternative Californian", needs convincing. Fresh from Heathrow via northern California, Brian trots into my flat and thrusts two candles into my hands. Two innocent beeswax candles smelling of honey and herbs. I thank him for the gift.

"Oh no," he replies, "I'll lie down and get comfortable."

Normal people would worry at this

point. Ha ha, not me. Nothing shocks me. Maybe I have not yet encountered the ultimate horror – nappies – but two candles? Pah. Kids' stuff.

Brian is lying on his side on the guest bed telling me to light one and put it in my ear. These are Hopi Earcandles, he tells me. They have soothing properties. They are big with Native Americans. I silently develop their advertising campaign: "Hopi Earcandles. Finally, a good reason to plait your hair."

He looks at me plaintively. I light a candle and pad over to the bed. By the time I reach his ear, I'm holding an inferno. The candle's burning far too quickly. A tall, lively streak of fire licks at me. What am I doing this? Because I am a morose

"Brian, I don't think this is right."

"Go on," he says calmly, his eyes wide. As I place the candle's unburnt base in his ear, a fiery bit breaks off and falls on his hair. Whooping wildly, I beat the cluster of flame out with my hand. An ember leaps for the pillowcase and burns a hole. The smell of singed hair fills my nose. A large bit of lava-like wax jumps for his neck. Brian's up with a yelp, brushing himself down and scanning for further burn holes. "Damn! This is not relaxing at all!" One bucket of water and several wet towels later, we give up. Brian is smeared with oily ash, his neck and sport red marks where hot wax has landed. There's enough smoke and burnt hair for a scratch'n'sniff edition of *Black Beauty*.

Brian tells me he is certain the sensation of ear and candle is eternal. He says it's karma. I say, "Those Hopi. They should do stand-up."

صكرا من الاصل

the lord giveth

We Zoroastrians do not encourage embracing while at worship ourselves

david aaronovitch

That the Methodist Conference – convened in Central Hall, London, yesterday – should have observed a minute's silence for those in the church who have suffered sexual harassment at the hands of clergy or lay members, is not, of course, a matter for levity. Indeed, other churches and organisations would do well to emulate the successors to Wesley.

But I was rather puzzled by the self-lacerating references to what might be happening during what the Methodists call the "Peace". This is the bit in the service when they all say "the peace of the Lord be with you" to their neighbours. Except that – gradually – the old, sedate habit of mumbling it quickly to the chap in the next seat and shaking his hand has been replaced by declaiming it very loudly and then enfolding him in a large and joyous embrace. There have even been reports of kissing.

Now, I do not wish to offend the members of any faith; we Zoroastrians do not encourage embracing while at worship ourselves, but this is largely because the fire makes it awkward. But I do rather wonder what could possibly be taking place in full public view during the few seconds of the "Peace". Is there "inappropriate hugging" (is that a crucifix in your pocket, or are you just pleased to see me)? Or certain types of celebrants who just can't wait to get their rocks off from one Sunday to the next?

Puzzlingly, the Methodist chap on the radio yesterday suggested that the problem was not so much in the giving, but in the receiving. There might be those, he said, who had been abused as children, and for whom any uninvited physical contact with an unknown adult could be traumatic. I wasn't abused as a child, but I have to say that you don't have to be a trauma sufferer to recoil at some whistery worshipper planting his lips on your face and pressing his roll-neck against your chest.

This has little, though, to do with harassment, and everything to do with Englishness. We do not like – nor can we cope with –

invasions of our personal space (unless such border crossings have been negotiated through the long process of courtship, or are inherited as a consequence of consanguinity). It is bad enough for most of us that our culture should permit children to suffer the ritual kisses of elderly aunts, or force them to spend an intolerable minute on some Santa's bony knee before earning a manky little present.

It is not to be wondered at, then, that the gradual introduction of continental physical enthusiasm has confused many of us badly. We are unsure what to do. Some friends now expect to be hugged. But which ones, how hard, and for how long? Women acquaintances of a modern cast may think it pleasant to be kissed. But on which part of the face, how often, and with how much pleasure?

This week I was invited to a splendid party by a very beautiful woman and her attractive husband. I know the husband rather the better, having only met the wife on two previous occasions, both of them fairly brief. On arrival I marched boldly up to her, and was about to shake her hand and try a phrase or two of cultured conversation when she pursed her perfect lips and leant towards me.

I panicked. I kissed the wrong cheeks in the wrong order (nearly taking off her nose in the process) and – to make matters worse – made an audible self-mocking "mwaah!" both times. It was mortifying, leaving the clear impression that I did not wish to be so intimate, that I was a standoffish ingrate. But the truth was quite the contrary. Indeed, I wanted to take her in my arms and try to convince her that – though she had married the wrong man – it was not too late for the mistake to be rectified. Right there and then.

So, Methodists, there are two possible answers. One is to go back to hand-shaking. The other is to carry on, and hope that gradually – as we get used to expressing ourselves physically – we will get better at judging it. Perhaps there's a course to go on.

by David McKittrick

To say that tomorrow's march at Drumcree is a defining moment is actually gravely to underestimate its potential importance for Northern Ireland's future and the prospects for peace. It has the capacity to wreck the place.

If things go well the sense of relief generated could put new life into the hopes for progress. If they go badly it could be as calamitous as last year, or even worse. The sobering fact is that few think it will go well. Ever since Drumcree 2, as last July's confrontation is known, it has been clear that Drumcree 3 could pose similar problems to the political and security authorities, and indeed everyone else.

Some may question whether all this doom and gloom is justified: after all, there always seems to be trouble in Northern Ireland – so why all the fuss? The answer is that it has the dangerous potential to develop into prolonged confrontation between the security forces and militant loyalists. And there is no guarantee that the violent republicans will stay on the sidelines.

John Major's government reacted to Drumcree 2 with denial, in effect pretending that nothing of any great moment was happening. In the midst of the crisis Sir Patrick Mayhew, then Northern Ireland Secretary, famously told an incredulous BBC interviewer to "Cheer up, for heaven's sake."

Sir Patrick has gone, leaving Labour and the security forces to pick up the pieces. The RUC, far from cheering up, privately acknowledged that law and order had broken down. The Chief Constable, Ronnie Flanagan, later said: "Northern Ireland cannot withstand another summer like this. The country... crept right to the edge of the abyss."

Another senior police figure said privately: "We were on the brink of all-out civil war. We did ourselves that we live in a democracy – we have the potential in this community to have a Bosnia-style situation."

Catholic confidence in the RUC was close to collapse. Police sources acknowledged that nationalist faith in the force had never been as low since internment without trial was introduced in 1971.

A senior Presbyterian minister summed it up as "Northern Ireland's Chernobyl, with almost a meltdown in community relations".

The poison released into the political atmosphere has barely lessened over the course of the past year: one example



Drumcree last year cost £25m, scared off much-needed investment and destabilised Northern Ireland to an extent which the IRA at its peak could only dream of

of its effects was the recent jump in the Sinn Féin vote.

Drumcree last year cost £25m or more, frightening off much-needed investment and destabilising Northern Ireland to an extent which the IRA at its peak could only dream of. Since then prominent figures have been pleading that a re-run must be avoided at all costs. Over the past year there have been dozens of private and public initiatives aimed at averting a replay. Yet all seem to have foundered on the bedrock of intransigence and the grim determination not to allow the other side anything that could be regarded as a victory.

Pushing the march through with relatively hardline positions, fervently wish to avoid trouble. But the starkness of the options for the march – either it goes down Garvaghy Road or it does not – means that even many of these people are torn between preserving the peace and asserting their own community's rights.

There are also many who are positively spoiling for a fight and looking forward with great relish to street disturbances. One cause of much relief is the fact that the leaders of the major loyalist paramilitary groups are not intent on trouble. If it develops, however, many in their ranks can be expected to wade in.

The smaller Loyalist Volunteer Force, by contrast, has openly vowed to kill civilians in southern Ireland if the march is not allowed through, and will probably engage in violence in the north as well. The number of active terrorists in its ranks is relatively small, but the group has a network of contacts among some of the hundreds of militant "Kick the Pope" bands. While not actually armed these can cause huge damage in street clashes.

Violence from the IRA or the smaller INLA group also cannot be ruled out; nor can

the possibility of simple rioting from hooligans on either side, fired up by a heady mixture of political tensions and beer.

The prospect of trouble could hardly have come at a worse time for both the peace process and the multi-party talks. Tony Blair appears to have the IRA boxed in, politically at least, with his recent abandonment of the weapons decommissioning requirement. He has also put David Trimble and his pivotal Ulster Unionist party under pressure, in essence telling them that in the event of an IRA ceasefire he must face the prospect of talks with Sinn Féin. At this crucial moment

nobody really knows whether the IRA is contemplating a ceasefire, and nobody knows whether Mr Trimble will, to coin a phrase, bite the bullet on decommissioning and stay in the talks or walk out. The lack of a new ceasefire would obviously be a setback for the peace process: an Ulster Unionist exodus would be a severe blow to the talks.

Drumcree could be decisive here: for a defeat for nationalists would get the IRA off the hook and might well postpone a ceasefire. The corollary is that a defeat for Unionists would make a walk-out from the talks more likely.

The upshot is therefore that one stretch of highway in an unattractive County Armagh town has been vested with huge historical and contemporary significance. Drumcree 2 did terrible damage to the fabric of the state and the moral authority of government: the widespread fear is that Drumcree 3 will do it again.

The Empire turns its back again

Fans of the empire must be weeping with joy into their cornflakes this morning. The United Nations has decided to put an end to the remnants of colonialism before the turn of the century. On the UN's past record of success, this might well herald a full-scale process of decolonisation across the planet.

There are many among the formerly colonised who would rejoice, of course – toadies, creeps and lickspittles all over the globe have secretly lamented the loss of their masters for nearly half a century now.

Here at the centre, there is the usual post-July the Fourth gloom: people still wonder how the inbred idiot George III managed to mislay the greatest prize in the history of colonialism – the United States. In just a few weeks, Indians and Pakistanis will also celebrate the 50th anniversary of their escape from the clutches of civilisation. And you would have had to be in the Falklands to escape the handing over of Hong Kong.

As ever, the nation's imperial past not only provides an occasion for a great deal of nonsensical posturing, it also exposes continuing hypocrisy. When it came to the issue of colonial possessions, only one political principle has ever stood still long enough to be spotted: bugger the natives – what does London care? In the post-war period, Enoch Powell,



Trevor Phillips

Britain preferred to focus on Hong Kong where the time for action was past, while ignoring the tragedy unfolding in Montserrat

the scourge of immigrants, argued that Caribbean immigration was good for Britain, because it filled a labour gap, and neutralised the drive for independence. Just a decade later he was thundering that the black tide threatened to cause a race war triggered by competition for jobs.

The left made the same journey in reverse. Labour, which condemned Powell in the Sixties, spent much of the previous decade arguing that immigrants would be better off fighting for the independence and development of their own countries, instead of driving down the wages of British workers.

This week, we saw colonial hypocrisy on a grand scale. While all eyes looked east to Hong Kong, a desperate human tragedy was being played out in the west, on the island of Montserrat. As ever in Britain's colonial past, it proved convenient to focus where we have no power, while ignoring our responsibilities in an arena where we might, with courage and firmness of purpose, make a difference.

The hypocrisy over Hong Kong has been well-rehearsed. Having promised the Hong Kong people that come what may they would not be abandoned to tyranny, we did just that. The people have been led to believe for the past 50 years that should the territory return to China they would be offered a choice: stay and live with the

new regime, or a passport to the motherland. As we now know, the campaign by Lord Tabbitt and others stymied that promise. They turned a historic debt of honour into a nasty little skirmish about immigration. Thus though the handover was marked by a pointless row over China's human-rights record, Peking will now do as it pleases, and anything the British say or do is just a shadow play. The time to act has passed, and we failed the test of nerve. Despite the ethical policy devised by Robin Cook, it seems that we will co-operate with the largest market in the world; we cannot afford to do otherwise.

Yet, half the globe away, six and a half thousand subjects of the Queen are watching the death of their island in abject poverty and hopelessness, while our government appears to be paralysed by a fear of offending a few local politicians. Montserrat has suffered two blows of fate in the past decade. In 1989, Hurricane Hugo destroyed nearly all buildings on the island, thus wrecking much of the island's principal earner, tourism. Within months, the population started to drop. In 1995, there were 12,500 islanders. So far, 6,000 have packed their bags and gone, many to neighbouring islands, which are themselves unlikely to offer a new life. The rest remain on the edge of disaster, devastated by the two-year-long eruption of the

island's volcano, which now threatens to make Montserrat uninhabitable. Four thousand people have no homes to go to.

Conditions there are all but intolerable. The island's hospital has been turned into communal housing, even though it has no inside toilets. The two police cells have now been filled, and the local library has been turned into a prison, inadequate to cope with the inevitable violence and burglary that arise in such situations. Schooling is close to collapse: many of those evacuated from the island are teachers.

Above all, there is still a real risk to life. Many of the island's farms lie in the danger zone. If farmers neglect their land, they may starve; if they do not, they may forfeit their lives. The toll is already heavy – eight dead, 10 missing, presumed dead, and a further eight disappeared.

Yet in spite of pressure from the likes of the MP Diane Abbott and the Liberal Democrat peer Baroness Hamwee, our government does not seem to appreciate the urgency of the situation. Some funds have been made available, expertise has been lent, particularly by the Royal Navy, and Baroness Symons, the Foreign Office minister, paid a visit to examine the scene. But funds remain limited; there is not yet, as I understand it, a proper liaison system with the government of Montserrat; and the parliamentary record suggests that

Labour ministers, like their predecessors, remain more concerned with not having to extend entry rights to the UK to Montserratians than in giving them the wherewithal to survive.

Fundamentally, a decision has to be made: can Montserrat be saved? If the conclusion is that it cannot, we should tell the Montserratians now and make plans for their resettlement. But if the island can be saved, then the Foreign Office has to decide if the colonial power will open its purse, just as it did for the Falklands.

Preservation of the British way of life had all-party support in the South Atlantic; is there any reason why the principle should be different for this corner of the Caribbean? The muttering in Whitehall is that, though the Foreign Office would like to help, its hand is somewhat stayed by disagreements between local politicians. This is a sorry excuse, reminiscent of every colonial administrator's effort to blame the natives for his own incompetence. When it mattered to Britain, the views of colonial peoples never stood in the way of London's will. Whether it does now could be the first real test of Robin Cook's commitment to ethics and human rights in foreign policy. As long as Britain remains a colonial power, it should act like one, and exercise responsibility to rescue its subjects.

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Budget clampdown is behind market frenzy

Andrew Yates
and John Wilcock

The wild fluctuations in the UK stock market since Wednesday's Budget have been driven by the surprise abolition of tax breaks for market-makers, according to informed City sources. The FTSE 100 jumped 80.3 points on Thursday but fell back 18.9 points yesterday to close at 4812.8. Intra-day movements in the index were volatile on both days.

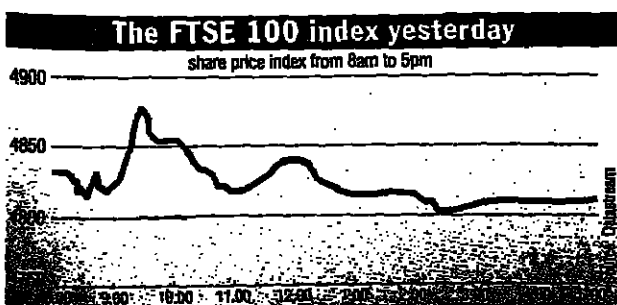
One of London's biggest market-makers, who did not want to be named, said yesterday: "I have never seen the volatility in the UK equity market that we have seen in the last 48 hours." He blamed an obscure clause in the Budget which removes tax exemption for dividends held by banks for trading purposes.

The clause has prompted a scramble by tax advisers to work out the implications for City investment banks, many of whom own equity books worth hundreds of millions of pounds.

The market-maker continued: "Some of these banks have enormous books and they have to be revalued downwards. It is a material hit in some cases." Some analysts said the Budget tax changes could cost the banking sector more than £1bn.

Traders have rushed to re-balance their equity and derivative portfolios since Wednesday's Budget in an attempt to reduce losses arising from long-term fixed-income contracts with building societies and insurance companies.

These contracts provide building societies and insurance companies with a guaranteed income stream, typically over five years, high enough to pay out on customer policies which guarantee returns linked to stock market performance. "They [the banks] had to buy shares to re-balance their portfolios to compensate for a fall in dividend income due to tax cuts," one source said yesterday. The bank takes on the risk of



providing this guaranteed income stream in return for a fee. To hedge its risks the bank would normally invest in a basket of FTSE 100 stocks and a series of complex financial instruments, including futures and options.

How the market-making tax scam worked

- The market-maker buys shares just before dividends are due to be paid to shareholders.
- After securing the dividend, the market maker then sells the shares, establishing a loss on the transaction. This is because the price invariably falls to compensate for the fact that the shares have gone ex-dividend. That price fall is then treated as a trading loss and 'written off' against the bank's corporate tax bill.
- The market-maker receives the dividend, which up until the Budget would have been treated as exempt from corporation tax. It has thus established a fictitious loss. Furthermore, the tax credit on the dividend payment of 20 per cent, although not paid, could be offset against the market maker's future corporation tax liability, thus further reducing any tax paid.
- Market makers have factored these tax breaks into the pricing of equity option contracts used by building societies and insurance companies to offer investors guaranteed returns. "Guaranteed" return funds have become a popular form of saving with retail investors over the last two years. Some of these options will now have to be re-hedged through the stock market to make up the shortfall in dividend income.

from shareholdings. The tax changes mean that the banks have been saddled with mis-priced derivatives. "Undoubtedly this is a problem. They will have to revalue their derivatives books," said an analyst yesterday. It is thought this alone could cost up to £400m.

The market in these guaranteed bonds has exploded in recent years with a host of new products hitting the high street, and it is now estimated to be worth at least £3bn. "The key players in the market are UBS, BZW and NatWest. Other banks such as J.P. Morgan and Midland are involved. Together they have mopped up virtually all of the business," said one source. Each of these banks stand to lose millions of pounds, and individual losses could rise as high as several hundreds of millions of pounds, another source suggested.

The Inland Revenue's decision to clamp down on a tax scam exploited by market-makers will cost banks well in excess of £100m a year. Market-makers had been buying huge amounts of shares in companies that were just about to pay dividends. When the shares went ex-dividend their price would duly fall. Not only could the bank set this price fall against future profits, but it would receive the dividend and an associated 20 per cent tax credit that could be used to reduce its tax bill at a later date.

The Inland Revenue confirmed that its reforms, which are projected to yield £500m by 2001, would affect all market-makers. Any banks holding preference shares are also likely to be hit.

The Inland Revenue is understood to be determined to push these tax reforms through to deter companies marketing a range of new financial products specifically designed to avoid tax.

The tax changes will probably lead to a rise in prices of guaranteed income policies. Existing policy holders will not be affected.



What the papers say: Mirror Group chief executive David Montgomery (right) with Chris Oakley, Midland Independent Newspapers chief executive, who will join the Mirror board

Mirror up after £297m MIN deal

Sameena Ahmad

Shares in Mirror Group rose strongly on relief that it would not launch a rights issue to fund a £297m agreed bid for Midland Independent Newspapers (MIN) announced yesterday. David Montgomery, chief executive, said also Mirror Group was not planning to sell any titles or its 20 per cent stake in Scottish Media to pay for the deal, worth 210p cash per MIN share, with a partial share alternative.

"We do not need to sell anything to fund this deal. Our assets are all performing well and there is more growth to come," said Mr Montgomery. John Allwood, finance director, added that in the longer term the group might look to buy regional papers where they were not represented, such as the South-east.

Shares in Mirror Group, which first disclosed it was in talks with MIN last month, rose 14.5p to 200.5p. Shares in MIN, which owns the Birmingham Post and Birmingham Evening Mail, the UK's second biggest selling regional newspaper, added 5.5p to 194p.

Mr Montgomery said the acquisition, which will be funded through debt, would expand Mirror Group's role as a major player in the regional newspaper publishing market.

Mirror Group, which owns a large stake in The Independent, has a 54 per cent newspaper market share in Scotland largely through its ownership of the Daily Record. "We imagine that we will at least replicate that position in the Midlands," said Mr Montgomery.

Analysis do not expect there to be a monopoly issue, though the bid automatically triggers a referral to the Department of Trade and Industry.

As well as £5m cost savings next year and further savings beyond, Mr Montgomery said the deal offered significant scope to raise revenues.

Chris Oakley, chief executive of MIN, will join the Mirror board.

Pound set to reach DM3

Magnus Grimond

The pound built on its post-Budget gains yesterday to break decisively through the DM2.95 central rate at which it crashed out of the European exchange rate mechanism in 1992.

As the currency also came close to 10 francs to the pound, dealers said it was now on course to breach the DM3 barrier, causing more pain for exporters and foreign earners, like LucasVarity, GKN and Cadbury Schweppes, all of which saw further falls in their share prices yesterday.

The pound ended up around two pence at DM2.965, its highest level against the German currency for nearly six years, and was close to 3 pence better against the franc at FR9.9571, a level not seen since early 1991, having touched 9.98% at one stage yesterday. The sterling index, which measures the pound against a basket of other currencies, added a further half point to 104, also its peak level 1990.

Many economists said Wednesday's Budget, the first by the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, would do little to cool an incipient consumer boom. As a result, the currency markets were now betting on next week's meeting of the Bank of England's new monetary policy committee

raising interest rates by up to half a percentage point to attempt to choke off demand, particularly the effect of building society windfalls, making sterling more attractive to foreign investors.

Simon Briscoe, economist at the Japanese bank Nikko Europe, said the Chancellor seemed to be distancing himself from the economy in the short term. "If he really was concerned, he would have raised taxes in the Budget... I think it will only get worse next week. Our feeling is [the Bank] will raise rates next week and there is more to come."

He expects a 0.25 per cent increase to be announced. A half point jump would send "a very strong message" about the Budget measures, he said.

However, although the pound is likely to go through DM3, Mr Briscoe said there was a growing realisation that it was overvalued. This view was shared by Marian Bell, economist at the Royal Bank of Scotland, who said the market was pricing in "too early and too steep rate rises." She dismissed suggestions the Bank would increase rates by a half-point next week. "The pound is quite obviously overshooting... but if I am right about the Bank next week, that could be the trigger for a correction," she said.

Gold slumps to fresh low

Clifford German

The price of gold fell almost \$8 to \$324.50 an ounce yesterday, its lowest level since December 1985, in reaction to news that the Australian central bank had sold 167 tonnes of gold, two-thirds of its entire stock, over the past six months to swell its interest-earning foreign exchange reserves.

The Australian sale is slightly smaller than the 203 tonnes the Belgian central bank sold in March last year and the 300 tonnes sold by the Netherlands in January this year. But it comes at a time when the gold price has already fallen by \$50 an ounce over the last six months.

Australia is the world's third biggest gold producer and the clear inference that it has lost

faith in the metal sent shock waves through bullion markets. Gold mining shares in Australia, Canada and South Africa also dropped yesterday.

Turnover on the bullion markets yesterday was relatively low because US markets were closed for Independence Day. But holding gold costs central banks alone an estimated \$15bn (\$8.9bn) a year in lost interest. Several more central banks are thought to be considering selling gold reserves now that inflation appears to be under control. Some bullion market analysts are suggesting that the price could fall below \$300 an ounce.

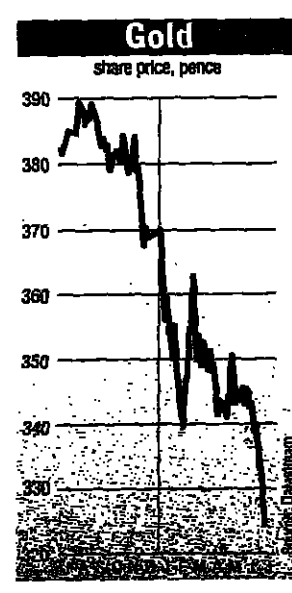
The setback comes at a time when South African gold mining companies are preparing next week to announce overall net losses for the second quarter of

the year. Australian gold mines are also losing money. The average cost of producing an ounce of gold there is \$358 an ounce.

World-wide demand for gold, especially for jewellery, is already greater than the amount of newly mined gold but stocks in central banks and investment holdings are ample to meet excess demand for many years.

However, some analysts believe that a steep fall in the gold price now could be the best thing for markets in the long run because it would stimulate demand for gold jewellery, particularly in the Far East. Demand for gold to make jewellery is already greater than purchases by central banks and the conventional investment demand for gold bars and coins.

Analysts said that there was substantial pent-up demand in China, and in India where gold jewellery remained a store of value for many rural families and an integral part of the dowry system.



In China, and in India where gold jewellery remained a store of value for many rural families and an integral part of the dowry system.

Property group unveils BT bid

Magnus Grimond

Argent, a retail property group, yesterday unveiled a £240m bid from the British Telecom pension scheme as part of plans for Peter and Michael Freeman, the group's founders, to bow out of the business.

The general offer at 375p a share in cash and loan notes became mandatory under Stock Exchange rules after the pension fund's property arm, Britel, agreed to buy out the combined 39.5 per cent stake belonging to the Freeman brothers and their venture capital backers.

Unusually, the offer, which reflects the current net asset value, is pitched at a substantial discount to Thursday's closing market price of 450p, sending the shares sliding 77.5p to 372.5p yesterday. Britel is understood to be keen for Argent to retain its stock market listing so it does not have to consolidate the property group's debt.

If the deal goes through, the Freemans are set to receive £12m from their 5 per cent stake in Argent, on top of around £2m the pair have realised since the group floated at 255p a share three years ago. The realisation compares with an initial investment of £100,000 when they founded the business in 1981. The two, who are joint managing directors, will move from their current six-month rolling contracts paying an annual salary of £230,000 to a fixed one-year term while successors are found.

Peter Freeman said yesterday they felt the company had only grown them. "We would rather work on three schemes and add value at a minute level than have 30 schemes and have people report to us... We want to get back to running our own company."

He said they wanted to return to putting together big developments without having to deal with an investment portfolio. The other beneficiaries from yesterday's deal are SBC Warburg, Pincus Investors, an arm of the biggest venture capital group in the US, AF Portfolio, a part of another US venture capital group, and Chasopharm, a private group, all of whom have backed Argent since 1988. The other investor selling is Kleinwort Benson.

Oftel orders BT to raise chargecard price

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Don Cruickshank, the telecommunications regulator, yesterday used his new competition powers for the first time by ordering British Telecom to raise the price of its popular chargecard service.

The ruling came on the same day that BT revealed increases in chargecard call prices, a move it insisted was pre-planned. But Oftel, the watch-

dog, warned the action may not be enough.

Almost 15 million customers have chargecards, which allow them to charge calls made from payphones and other handsets to their home or office bill. BT has 92 per cent of the market while its nearest competitor, Mercury, has just 7 per cent.

Oftel said it had acted after competitors complained BT's chargecard revenues did not cover costs. The group charges an average of 11p a minute for calls.

"The low retail prices set by BT mean other operators cannot compete on equal price terms in offering chargecard services, especially to residential customers," Mr Cruickshank said.

BT admitted it was losing money on the chargecard and said that from 7 August it would introduce a single 20p-a-minute rate for all inland calls, a move which had no connection with Oftel's announcement.

A spokesman said: "This is a bit silly because we were already

doing this anyway and Oftel was aware of that. We are surprised and a bit disappointed."

But Oftel said its order still stood. "We're not sure the new prices meet our concerns either. The onus is now on BT to prove they're not anti-competitive."

Mr Cruickshank won the fair trading condition, which gives him the power to ban any behaviour he believes is anti-competitive, after beating off a High Court challenge by BT last year.

STOCK MARKETS					
FTSE 100	Dow Jones	Nikkei	Hang Seng	Shanghai	Hong Kong
4812.8	8310.0	21400.0	10000.0	10000.0	10000.0
4812.8	8310.0	21400.0	10000.0	10000.0	10000.0
4812.8	8310.0	21400.0	10000.0	10000.0	10000.0
4812.8	8310.0	21400.0	10000.0	10000.0	10000.0
4812.8	8310.0	21400.0	10000.0	10000.0	10000.0
4812.8	8310.0	21400.0	10000.0	10000.0	10000.0
4812.8	8310.0	21400.0	10000.0	10000.0	10000.0
4812.8	8310.0	21400.0	10000.0	10000.0	10000.0
4812.8	8310.0	21400.0	10000.0	10000.0	10000.0

INTEREST RATES					
Short sterling	UK medium gilt	US long bond	3M	6M	12M
7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12
7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12
7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12
7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12
7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12
7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12
7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12
7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12
7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12	7.12

CURRENCIES					
\$/£	\$/DM	\$/¥	DM/£	DM/¥	¥/£
1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638
1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638
1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638
1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638
1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638
1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638
1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638
1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638
1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638	1.6638

OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS CURRENT INTEREST RATES					
EFFECTIVE FROM 5 JULY 1997					
Amount invested	ANNUAL INTEREST %	MONTHLY INTEREST %	MONTHLY INTEREST %	MONTHLY INTEREST %	MONTHLY INTEREST %
OFFSHORE MILLENNIAL BOND Limited issue					
Fixed until 1.1.2002	7.50	7.50			
£10,000 or more					
OFFSHORE 30 ACCOUNT					
£100,000 or more	6.85	6.85	6.85	6.85	6.85
£50,000 or more	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
£25,000 or more	6.70	6.70	6.70	6.70	6.70
£10,000 or more	6.65	6.65	6.65	6.65	6.65
£5,000 or more	6.60	6.60	6.60	6.60	6.60
OFFSHORE INSTANT ACCOUNT					
£100,000 or more	6.35	6.35	6.35	6.35	6.35
£50,000 or more	6.25	6.25	6.25	6.25	6.25
£25,000 or more	6.15	6.15	6.15	6.15	6.15
£10,000 or more	6.10	6.10	6.10	6.10	6.10
£5,000 or more	6.05	6.05	6.05	6.05	6.05

Statistics as of 4 July

Statistics as of 4 July

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JEREMY WARNER

Don't blame Brown for insanity in the markets

Share prices are actually responding in an entirely rational and measured way to the events of the last two months. It can be argued. All the same, there have been some mighty strange happenings this week

So who's calling whom bonkers? According to an unnamed "senior member of the Government" quoted in the *Financial Times* this week ahead of the Budget, the markets were "bonkers" to think Gordon Brown was not going to abolish tax credits on dividends.

For Peter Lilley, shadow Chancellor, this was tantamount to a Budget leak, and he said so just before Mr Brown got up to give his one-hour dissertation. He was right, of course. It was a leak, but with the real news just about to happen, the Government had no difficulty sidelining the issue.

The point about insanity in the markets, however, is a rather wider one. The word "bonkers" could just as easily be applied to the stock market's apparent tendency these days to view anything New Labour cares to throw at it in a sunny disposition. Certainly, the equity market seems to be behaving in a more than usually odd way right now.

Interest rates to rise? Just say it, Gordon. What the City for a £500m and tax avoidance measure, outstanding Chancellor. Abolish tax credits on dividends well, we deserve it really, don't we. Sterling through the roof, excellent stuff. A windfall levy on the utilities, more, please. More. The stock market's ability to take punishment with no apparent ill effect knows no bounds. Since Labour came to power the FTSE 100 share index has risen by 11 per cent. What's it all about?

Actually, this is not an entirely perverse response either to Labour's performance at the polls or to what has happened since. Markets had been anticipating a Labour win for at least a year before it happened. Fear of what Labour might do once elected held London equities back, so that they did not share fully in the bull market enjoyed by Wall Street and the main European bourses.

Now Labour is in, and on the evidence of the first two months, it appears that Mr Blair is going to be as good as his word. There are no Jospin type nasties up his sleeve, no reds under the bed, and there's to be no playing fast and loose with the economy. Labour has signalled its willingness to continue in broad terms with the same set of macro economic policies as the last Government. The bells and whistles added on to meet the party's social agenda are neither here nor there.

Indeed, Gordon Brown has, if anything, shown himself to be of even sterner stuff than his hush puppy predecessor. He's given up control of monetary policy (though it ought to be said here that he's also loosened the inflation target a bit), and he's committed himself to a rigid long-term plan in fiscal policy and spending. He's tied himself up in a straitjacket and the City just loves him for it. Whew, is the response of markets. After a year of worrying about what might be in store for the corporate sector and the economy, it is like a pressure cooker being released.

The same is broadly true of the abolition of tax credits on dividends. Now if this had not happened, the stock market would have roared away like an express train. In fact, everyone has long believed it likely and it was already largely factored into stock valuations.

These are all good reasons for claiming that the stock market is not bonkers at all. Actually share prices are responding in an entirely rational and measured way to the events of the last two months, it can be argued. All the same, there have been some mighty strange happenings in share prices this week, some of which suggest the stock market should perhaps have been committed afeather.

Up and down, up and down, the FTSE 100 share index went yesterday, like a fiddler's elbow. Nobody had much of an explanation for what was going on, other than the rather unhelpful one that equities do not yet know what to make of the new Chancellor's first Budget. The day before the Budget, the FTSE 100 share index went up by 123 points on the rumour that the Chancellor was not after all going to abolish tax credits on dividends, its biggest one-day climb since the crash of 1987.

Logically, then, share prices should have fallen back again by at least that amount when it turned out that he was indeed dispensing with this £500m-a-year tax perk. Not a bit of it. The FTSE celebrated with another 100-point surge. This at a time when gilts were

falling and the pound surging in anticipation of higher interest rates. Surely some mistake? As it happens much of the activity in the stock market since the Budget has been caused by technical factors. It would therefore probably be wrong to interpret the market's tumble as the City giving Mr Brown the thumbs up. Actually what's been happening here is that some big providers of equity options have been forced to re-hedge their positions in response to the abolition of tax credits and moves by the Inland Revenue to close a lucrative tax loophole. It is hard to get to the bottom of this affair, which is arcane and complex, but observers believe market-makers have priced these tax breaks into the options, which as a consequence now face a shortfall that needs to be plugged. Suggestions that the whole thing will end up costing the City upwards of £1bn refuse to go away.

Nobody is going to have much sympathy for the City over these losses. Tax schemes like this are one of the reasons why City traders drive around in Porsches. But it does help to explain the FTSE's curious behaviour and it may be a harbinger of a rather less exuberant performance to come.

In any case, the FTSE 100 share index gives a rather misleading impression of what's happening to stock valuations more generally. The market surge has been led by financials, pharmaceuticals, and more recently, utility and retail stocks. The rest haven't done nearly as well and some, particularly pharmaceuticals, have actually gone down. The FTSE 250 index, representing the next 250 biggest companies after the 100, is now lower than at the beginning of May.

Mr Brown made much in his Budget of his desire to create a fiscal and economic framework for long-term investment in British industry. Unfortunately, his first Budget does little to help that cause, rather the reverse. Actually what the Budget did was just pile on the bad news for Britain's industrial heartland. Already hit badly by the strength of sterling, it is companies such as ICI, British Steel, and British Aerospace, which are most profoundly affected by the abolition of tax credits on dividends. According to Richard Kersley, equity strategist at BZW, around half the FTSE 100 companies will become underfunded in their pension schemes as a result of the move. Furthermore, most of these are industrial companies. The situation is worse once outside the top 100 companies. Moreover, it is these companies that benefit least from the corresponding cuts in corporation tax.

So perhaps the markets are not that bonkers after all. The really bonkers one may be Mr Brown in believing he can reverse the long-term decline in British manufacturing and its replacement with a service-orientated economy.

Trade war looms as Brussels vetoes Boeing merger

By Godsmark Business Correspondent

The prospect of a trade war between the US and Europe creased sharply yesterday after a European Commission indicated it would block the planned \$4bn (£2.5bn) merger between Boeing and McDonnell Douglas on competition grounds.

Experts from the committee of members which advises Karel in Miert, Competition Commissioner, are understood to have unanimously rejected as inefficient concessions offered by Boeing on Monday, which were intended to smooth the deal's regulatory passage.

The decision emerged just two days after the US regulator, the Federal Trade Commission, gave the merger its approval though conditions. The FTC argued that McDonnell Douglas already effectively ended competitive involvement in the international airline market, now dominated by Boeing and Airbus, the European consortium. Boeing is understood to have feared to remove the controversial clause in recently signed exclusive contracts with three US airlines, American, Continental and Delta, which gave the Seattle giant the sole right to supply engines for 20 years. The clause, which the FTC had described as

"potentially troubling," formed one of three main concerns raised by Mr Van Miert.

The commissioner is likely to argue that removing the wording of the contract would simply be a sop to Airbus. "It wouldn't mean anything for Airbus because the three airlines would simply carry on buying exclusively from Boeing," said one analyst yesterday. "But for them it's an economic nonsense not to do that."

The EC also worried about the sheer scale of the merged company, which would have sales of \$48bn worldwide and more than two-thirds of the global airline market. Another serious worry was that Boeing would receive indirect state aid from McDonnell's defence contracts. The spill-over between US government defence programmes and commercial activities would be virtually impossible to police.

An EC official would not give details of the advisory panel's decision before the official ruling on the deal is made public on 23 July. But the source said: "If adequate remedies are not offered the proposed concentration should be prohibited." Mr Van Miert has said he has the power to fine the two companies up to \$5bn.

Boeing last night insisted it had not received word of any

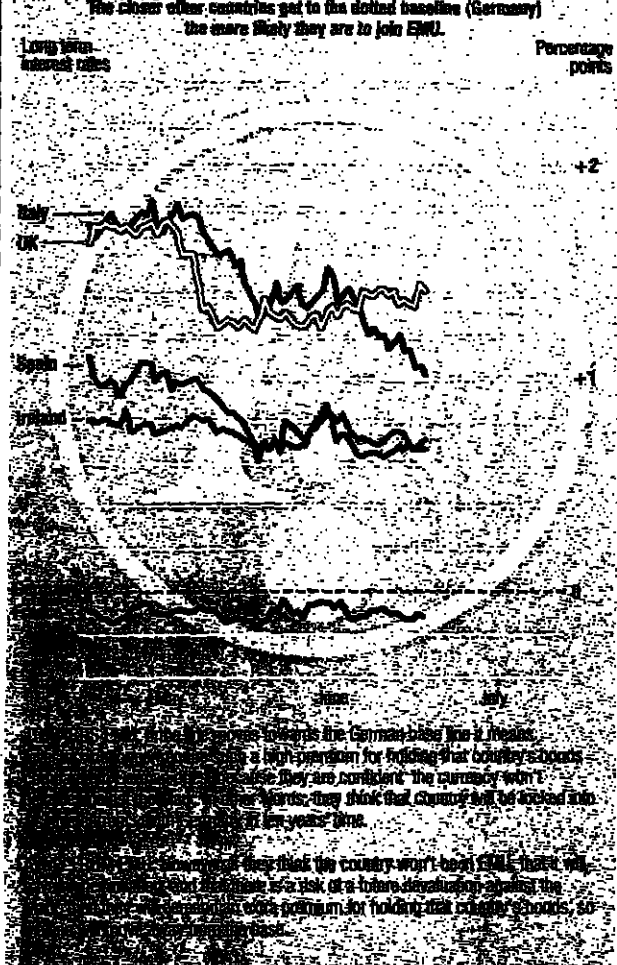
final ruling and said discussions would continue. "We haven't been notified. If what is being said is true we are obviously disappointed at the decision. But it is only a draft decision and we understand the door is still open."

Industry experts warned that if the EC did try to block the merger it could damage existing Airbus supply deals with US carriers, including a recent order for a further 50 planes from North West Airlines. United Airlines, the world's largest carrier, is another big Airbus customer while US Airways, the former USAir, is also considering a huge order.

Chris Avery, aerospace analyst with the French banking group Paribas, predicted the row would only be resolved by inter-governmental talks. "Don't underestimate the depth of official support for Boeing in the US. If the EU throws out the deal because the company hasn't been sufficiently conciliatory there is the real prospect of a trade war."

In a move which enraged the US, Mr Van Miert asserted his role in vetting the merger despite the fact that both the companies are US based. He claimed the power on the grounds that Boeing-McDonnell would have such a big share of the European market.

Who will be in EMU? The financial markets' view



The chart shows the percentage of countries expected to join the EMU by 1999. The graph shows a sharp decline from 100% in 1994 to around 20% in 1997, with a slight uptick in 1998.

Germany the key to softer criteria

Nigel Cope

After a relatively quiet week for monetary union watchers, attention has started to turn to forthcoming events in Germany and France. Next Friday will see the announcement of German budgetary plans for 1998 and news on whether a supplementary budget will be required for 1997.

The government is seeking to raise its borrowing requirement by an additional DM8bn (DM10bn (£2.7bn-£3.4bn)). This would take the German budget deficit to DM63bn.

Julian Jessop, of Nikko Europe says he now expects the German deficit to overshoot the Maastricht-imposed limit of 3 per cent of gross domestic product by as much as half a percentage point. However, some of our panel say recent comments from the Bundesbank hinted at a softening of the central bank's line on entry criteria. There is a growing feeling that with both Germany and France struggling to meet the criteria, some relaxing of the rules is likely.

German unemployment figures, due on Tuesday, will be watched with interest as these have recently been higher than forecast. With France also struggling to meet the 3 per cent limit, experts are waiting for an audit of the French accounts on 21 July.

IN BRIEF

Car sales rise by 7.3 per cent

Car sales in June rose by 7.3 per cent to 151,620, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders said. It brings registrations for the first half of 1997 to 1,053,787, a rise of 5.3 per cent on the same period in 1996. The SMMT described the increase as "modest", though there were signs that the market had picked up pace in the second quarter of 1997. The market shares of Ford and Vauxhall, the two top selling makes, both fell. The industry predicted total sales of 2.1 million this year, slightly above 1996 though below the peak of 2.3 million in 1989. Ernie Thompson, SMMT chief executive, said he had written to the Government asking for an urgent decision on the industry's demand for an end to the August registration change. The SMMT wanted 2-yearly letter changes, in March and September with the first to start in March 1998.

Rover workers agree three-year deal

Unions representing Rover car workers have agreed a three-year pay deal giving an increase of 3.5 per cent from November. Employees, known as "associates" by the company, will also receive a further 1 per cent from the same date if they have been with Rover for 12 months or more. In the following 2 years staff will receive increases over the rate of inflation plus half a percent, or 3.5 per cent, whichever is the higher. Rover has also agreed to replace profit-related pay with holiday bonuses worth £200 this month and rising to £250 after three years. Union members will vote on the deal later this month.

Thorn to close French rental operations

Thorn, the troubled retail group, is to close its domestic rental operations in France, the Benelux region and Finland due to poor trading. The closures, which will be phased over three years, will result in 500 job losses and a £30m provision. Thorn said its 64 stores in continental Europe had recorded a loss of £3m on sales of £40m last year. The company will keep its corporate operations in Europe which rent televisions and videos to hotels and other commercial customers.

Transworld Health Care gets UK acquisition

Transworld Health Care, the US home healthcare group chaired by Timothy Aitken, cousin of Jonathan Aitken, the disgraced former cabinet minister, has bought Allied Medicare, a private UK nursing services company, for £36.2m. The deal marks a further move by Transworld into the UK healthcare market. The group recently paid £20m to buy Omnicare, quoted on AIM-quoted.

Woolwich members opt to sell

Just over 23 per cent of the 2.5 million members of the Woolwich Building Society have opted to sell their free shares in one of the four auctions the Woolwich will organise next week for investors who will rather take cash than shares. The 370 million unwanted Woolwich shares will be sold in four equal tranches at auctions. The auctions will be held after the market closes on Monday to Thursday next week. The proceeds of the four auctions will be averaged out and distributed to shareholders who opted for cash. Dealers said Woolwich shares could start trading anywhere between 29p and 32p, which would give shareholders with a basic allocation of 450 shares a windfall of between £1,300 and £1,450.

Baroness Hogg joins 3i

Baroness Hogg, former head of the former prime minister John Major's policy unit, has been appointed a non-executive director of venture capital group 3i. Baroness Hogg is chairman of London Economics, a director of GKN, Energy Group PLC and NPI, and is about to become the chairman of Foreign and Colonial Smaller Companies Trust.

National Power Group Trustees

The Business editorial on Saturday 14 June commented on the use made by some employers of a surplus in their pension fund. One case was referred to where a raid on the surplus was bulldozed through at a meeting of trustees while the views of member representatives were ignored. In error, the pension fund concerned was wrongly identified as that of National Power. In fact, it was another pension fund altogether, though not one referred to elsewhere in the column. We apologise to the National Power Group Trustees for this mistake.

HK share rally fails to show

Stephen Vines on Hong Kong

The share rally which was expected to rectify Hong Kong's handover to Chinese rule has failed to materialise. Instead the first days of trading in the new era have ended with the blue chip Hang Seng index slipping by almost 74 points, or 2.46 per cent.

Yesterday's price fall was greater than the first day of trading with the index dipping below the 15,000 points mark to end the day 231 points down at 14,823.

Brokers cited concern over the new Government's plans to curb property speculation as the cause for the price fall. With the bulk of the Hong Kong stock market underpinned by property assets, any hint that prices may be forced down is always taken badly.

However, there was also evidence of considerable profit-taking as the stock market began to recover levels before the three-day break which marked the handover period.

On the last day of British rule, the Hang Seng Index closed at a record high of 15,197 points. Speculation in the market has been that Chinese-backed investors and tycoons close to the new regime would help stage a rally to mark the new era.

If they were trying to do this, their efforts became lost in an avalanche of trading which took market turnover close to record levels. Yesterday HK\$22.51bn (£1.7bn) worth of shares changed hands, down on the HK\$24.5bn which were traded on Thursday.

Although there may have been some Chinese disappointment over the

failure of the market to stage a post-handover rally, none of the analysts were viewing the month's performance as a vote of no confidence in the new administration.

Indeed, the shares which have best maintained their value have been the so-called red chips which are companies controlled by Chinese interests.

The shares which performed best in the past two days were counters rumoured to be the subject of interest by Chinese entities.

Yesterday it was the turn of three construction companies to be moved by rumours which sent their prices soaring.

Increasingly the Hong Kong market is being moved by companies who are perceived to be well connected with the new order, or likely to be so.

PGA European Tour delivers shock warning on profits

Nigel Cope City Correspondent

PGA European Tour, the quoted golf course operator which recently bought a 50 per cent stake in the Woburn Golf and Country Club, shocked its investors yesterday when it announced a profits warning, a new strategy and the departure of its managing director.

The company, which is the quoted vehicle of the sports promoter Mark McCormack, said that trading in the first half had been affected by the strength of sterling and "a variable performance from the group's individual operations".

It said that, based on current trading, it expected the results for the year, including exceptional costs would be "materially below market expectations".

The company's broker had been forecasting profits of £2.8m. PGA's shares closed 8.5p lower at 51.5p.

Sean Kelly, managing director, is leaving the group. He will be eligible for compensation of up to £210,000. Richard Thompson, chairman of Caspian, the owner of Leeds United football club, will move up to become executive chairman from his non-executive position. Ken Schofield, executive director of the PGA Tour and Ian Todd, managing director IMG Europe, will join the board as non-executive directors.

The company said that, following a review of strategy, it has decided to revise its previous aim of acquiring up to 20 golf courses by the year 2000. Instead, it will focus on the acquisition and development of flagship golfing venues.

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
US	1.6838	14.12	42.38	59.31	59.49
Canada	2.2428	89.58	202.97	337.36	337.36
Germany	2.9448	2.48	201.25	179.80	179.80
France	5.9265	266.26	225.70	5.8895	179.73
Italy	202.79	0.2	202.79	179.73	179.73
Spain	162.81	0.2	202.79	179.73	179.73
Japan	149.71	30.29	86.92	123.48	123.48
UK	0.7780	89.85	220.50	337.36	337.36
Switzerland	2.0078	27.89	85.93	123.48	123.48
Netherlands	3.7648	95.49	225.70	337.36	337.36
Sweden	1.0000	4.3	15.32	42.38	59.31
Australia	1.5448	24.85	62.92	86.92	86.92
New Zealand	1.5448	24.85	62.92	86.92	86.92
Hong Kong	7.7568	9.3	30.29	123.48	123.48
Malaysia	4.5448	34.51	105.35	225.70	225.70
Singapore	2.4848	2.5	2.14	149.71	149.71
South Africa	6.5277	36.75	105.35	225.70	225.70
India	2.4848	2.5	2.14	149.71	149.71
China	2.4848	2.5	2.14	149.71	149.71

Interest Rates

UK	5.50%	Germany	2.50%	US	5.50%	Japan	0.50%
Discount	3.00%	Discount	4.50%	Discount	5.00%	Discount	2.50%
Prime	6.00%	Prime	4.75%	Prime	5.50%	Prime	3.00%
Overnight	6.25%	Overnight	2.25%	Overnight	5.25%	Overnight	2.00%
3 month	2.50%	3 month	2.25%	3 month	5.00%	3 month	1.50%

Bond Yields

Country	5yr	10yr	15yr	20yr	30yr
UK	7.0%	7.25%	7.5%	7.75%	8.0%
US	5.50%	5.75%	6.0%	6.25%	6.5%
Germany	2.50%	2.75%	3.0%	3.25%	3.5%
Japan	0.50%	0.75%	1.0%	1.25%	1.5%

Money Market Rates

Overnight	1 day	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
UK	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
US	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
Germany	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%

Life Financial Futures

Contract	Settlement price	High/Low for day	Settlement price	Open interest
Long 100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short 100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Industrial Metals

Commodity	Price	Change	Commodity	Price	Change
Aluminum	1.6838	14.12	Steel	2.2428	89.58
Copper	2.9448	2.48	Lead	5.9265	266.26
Gold	202.79	0.2	Platinum	162.81	0.2

Other Spot Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
Argentina	1.6838	14.12	42.38	59.31	59.49
Australia	1.5448	24.85	62.92	86.92	86.92
Brazil	1.5448	24.85	62.92	86.92	86.92
Canada	2.2428	89.58	202.97	337.36	337.36
China	2.4848	2.5	2.14	149.71	149.71
France	5.9265	266.26	225.70	5.8895	179.73
Germany	2.9448	2.48	201.25	179.80	179.80
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Wales	1.5448	24.85	62.92	86.92	86.92
Zimbabwe	1.5448	24.85	62.92	86.92	86.92

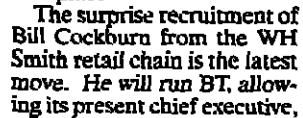
Tourist Rates

Tourist Rates	
£ Buys	£ Buys
Australia(Dollars)	23600
Austria(Schillings)	203700
Belgium(Francs)	593500
Canada(Dollars)	22475
Cyprus(Pounds)	03850
Denmark(Kroner)	103500
Holland(Guilders)	33850
Italy(Liras)	33500
£ Buys	£ Buys
France(Francs)	55075
Germany(Marks)	2385
Greece(Drachmas)	490000
Hong Kong(Dollars)	12800
India(Paisa)	10725
Indonesia(Rupiah)	2720000
Japan(Yen)	395300
Malaysia(M)	02250
£ Buys	£ Buys
New Zealand	10000
Norway(Kr)	10000
Portugal(Escudos)	10000
Spain(Pesos)	10000
Sweden(Kronor)	10000
Switzerland	10000
Taiwan(New Taiwan Dollars)	10000
Turkey(Liras)	10000
United States	10000

BT at new high despite £500m windfall tax blow

Taking Stock

Share spotlight



Some traders believed that New York's closure because of Independence Day provided a breathing space, allowing some of the tension to seep away. Still the market remains on edge. The impact of the tax changes has not been fully absorbed. And the conviction remains that the Bank of England will be forced to lift interest rates next week, per-

haps by half a point. Other increments expected later in the year.

Woolwich, the town's largest employer, is due to announce its 1992-93 budget on Monday. IG Industries, another local employer, expects a 3.2% increase in 1992-93.

As if to welcome the new year, the town's largest employer, IG Industries, is expected to announce its 1992-93 budget on Monday. IG Industries, another local employer, expects a 3.2% increase in 1992-93.

Groups suffering from the king's strength ren pressure. Lucas 10.5p to 192p and 920p. British Steel 3.5p to 137.75p.

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

after denying the pension tax changes would hit profits. The shares closed off 6p at 473.5p; at one time they were down 29.5p.

Williams, down 6.6p to

Mirror Group improved 14.5p to 200.5p on relief that its £297m cash bid for Midland Independent Newspapers was not accompanied by a rights issue. MIN rose 7p to 195.5p, with *Mirror* in the market, buying 24.98 per cent.

Thistle Hotels had a poor session, tormented by stories of a profits downgrading, probably from Merrill Lynch. The price fell 10p to 149p, lowest

Even the bid of the day failed to draw any enthusiasm. **Argent**, a property group, collapsed 77.5p to 372.5p as the BT pension fund agreed to take 39.5 per cent of the company at 375p. The deal triggers a bid obligation although the pension fund intends to retain the listing.

The slump in the gold price following the revelation of big

Fortune Oil stuck at 15.25p
as the company duly produced

Life Numbers, the telephone numbers business, was suspended at 9.5p. It is the subject of a reverse takeover: XL Communications is gaining an AIM listing through the deal. The company publishes a range of magazines with *Home and Life* its flagship publication. Terry Humphreys, XL's managing director will run the enlarged group.

Robotic Technology held at \$65.5p on Olex. In a capital shake-up, Finscrew of Finland's 48.7 per cent stake has been transferred to ARF, which is to make shares available to Robotic's staff. The company's profit ambitions for 1997/98 are on target.

Share Price Data										The Independent Index										Property										Telecommunications										Textiles & Apparel										Retailers, General										Tobacco										Transport										Water										Support Services										Government Securities																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																						</
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هكذا من الازل

TOUR DE FRANCE: Champion the target for young guns as Britain's Boardman bids for early glory. Robin Nicholl reports from Rouen



On the road again: Johnny Wertz, the US Postal Services team manager, confers with the veteran Italian rider, Adriano Baffi

Riis arrives in Anquetil's town to throw down Viking gauntlet

Normandy has known a few conquerors and conflicts in its time. It began with a Viking called Rollo in 911, and this week the Vikings are biking in for more conquests. Notably there is Bjarne Riis, a Dane with designs on a second triumph in the Tour de France, which opens with a time-trial in Rouen.

Riis's performance today is likely to be hampered by yesterday's banning of the bike he planned to ride, under a ruling that forbids "anything that reduces resistance and offers artificial acceleration." One consolation is that Abraham Olano, the principal threat to the Dane, was also planning to use the same design.

Riis will not expect to take the race leader's yellow jersey in the manner which Rollo and his raiders were granted Normandy — a move to prevent them invading Paris and Chartres. Normans like their conquerors bold, but after Guillaume le Conquerant had given King Harold one in the eye at Hastings, they had to wait nearly 900 years to parade public respect for another victorious local lad.

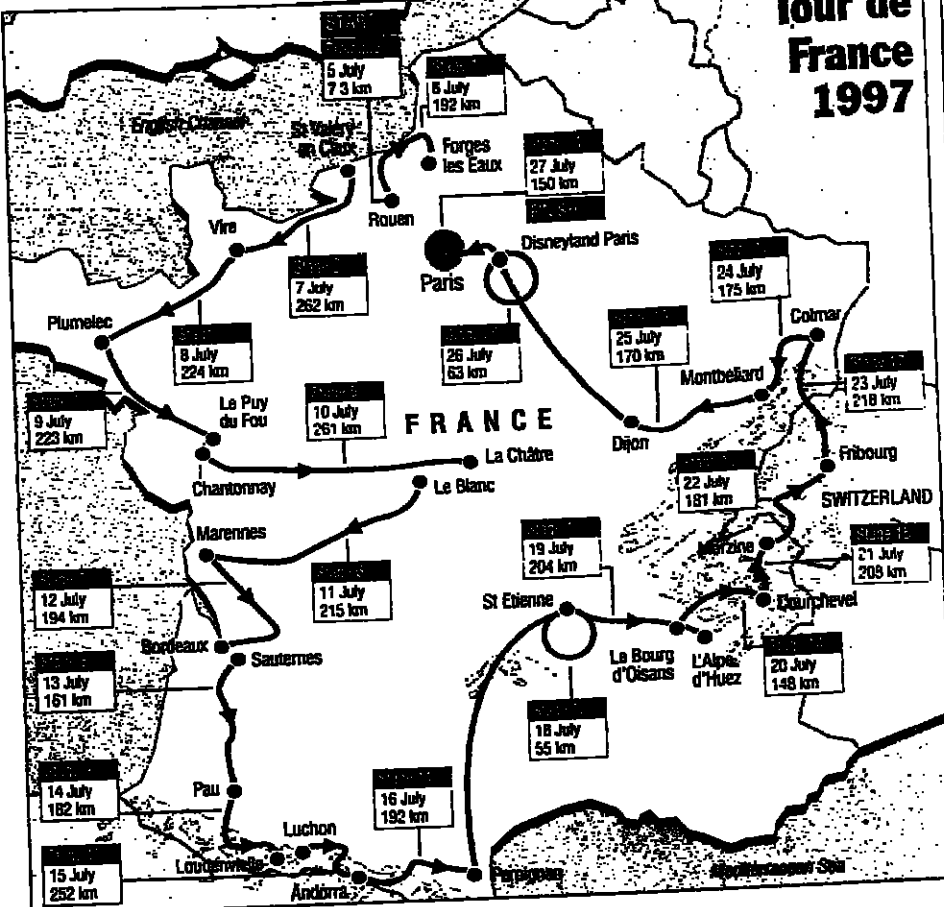
Then, their hero was a cyclist. Jacques Anquetil made a winning Tour debut in 1957 when he was 23, and his first stage success was in his home city of Rouen.

When the Tour opened there 36 years ago, Anquetil wore the leader's colours from day one until the finish in Paris, and he continued to make his fellow Rouennais proud until he died from cancer, aged 52.

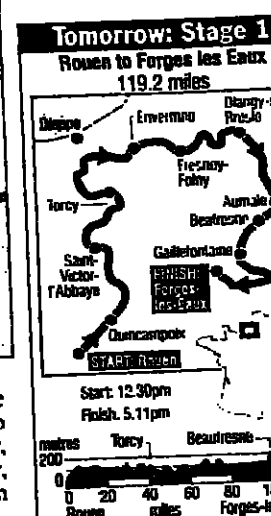
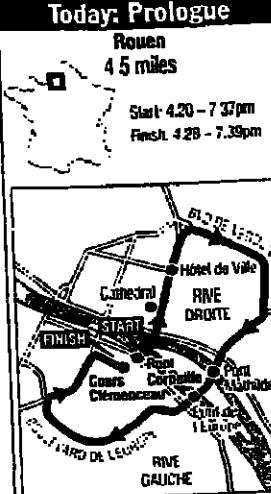
The Tour and Rouen have come together this week to remember "Master Jacques" 10 years after the death of a man who won five Tours, two Giro d'Italia, and one Vuelta a España.

On Wednesday a road on the banks of the Seine was renamed Quai Jacques Anquetil in the presence of his widow, Jeanine, and Anquetil's team-mates from the Tour of 1957. Today brings Eddy Merckx, Bernard Hinault and Miguel Indurain to Quincampoix, a small village north of Rouen, to pay homage at the tomb of their fellow five-time winner of the Tour.

Five hours later the 84th Tour opens at the junction of Quai Jacques Anquetil with a short time-trial for which the



Tour de France 1997



Norman would have been an odds-on favourite. His kind of dominance will not reign in this Tour. The Viking Riis was nine years older than Anquetil when he checked the six-in-a-row ambitions of Indurain last year.

Now he is the target, and Spain is providing some ammunition with Olano, who once upset his countrymen by having the effrontery to beat Indurain. This time Olano is their man, and this season the Basque joined Indurain's former sponsors, the finance houses of Banesto.

When a Dutch magazine polled other Tour winners for their top three, Indurain voted for Olano, the Frenchman Richard Virenque, and Riis. Merckx tipped Riis with Virenque and compatriot Laurent Jalabert second and third, while Hinault named Jalabert, Mikel Zarrabeitia and Olano.

There are 3,950 kilometres (2,468 miles) plus the Pyrenees and the Alps between Rouen and the finish in Paris, and ample scope for surprises.

Jan Ullrich, Riis's German team-mate, was last year's revelation, with second place and a stage win on his debut at 22. Even Walter Godefroot, as hard-boiled as managers come, was moved to predict that Ullrich could win the 1997 Tour. Indurain supported that sentiment, having felt the force when the German beat him by 56 seconds in a time-trial. Indurain's speciality, among the vineyards of St-Emilion, is the time-trial. The ambitions of Riis, however, come first for Ullrich, but not for those lurking in the wings. With Alex Zülle riding

with 12 pins in a collarbone fracture, Switzerland will look to Laurent Dufaux, fourth last year, rather than Tony Rominger, second in 1993, whose motivation is suspect.

New names are rising to the top mainly because of their ability to scale mountain passes. Dufaux's victory on the severe stage to Pamplona was the key to his 1996 success, and the Austrian Peter Luitzenberger climbed to fifth on his Tour debut via two good days in the Alps. Ivan Gotti comes to the Tour, where he was fifth in 1995, having given Italy their first Giro d'Italia in six years. Untimely crashes, though, have left Marco Pantani needing to re-establish his reputation as a climber.

The remaining 15km are over a twisting descent to the finish.

That test comes in 14 days, when British hopes are riding on Boardman to spend some time in the yellow jersey, as he did three years ago on his first Tour. Boardman cannot shake off memories of his crash that broke his wrist and an ankle on the first day of a rain-soaked 1995 Tour. It was also a damp day last year in the Netherlands, when he lost by two seconds to Zülle.

"Even if it rains the course will be OK," he said of the 7.3km (five-mile) circuit which has only one serious corner on its route over the Seine and past the 12th Century cathedral. "It's not technical, and I am very happy."

Pastries, pain and downhill dodgems

11.30am: I can't get Steve McQueen out of my head. We are heading out of the town square of Dignes-les-Bains in Haute Provence and Jose Arenas, driver and soigneur, or trainer, is treating me to a re-run of Bullitt.

I quickly realise the key to driving a team car, or indeed a race car or sponsor's car, in a bicycle race: the road is closed to the public. There is nothing coming. As long as you don't actually run over the riders, you can do what you want.

I'm in the second US Postal Services team car for the penultimate stage of the Dauphine Libre, 117 miles to Briançon. It's a big day for them, as Vycheslav Elomov, is in the yellow jersey, but only 49 seconds ahead of the Spaniard touted by many as this year's Tour de France winner, Abraham Olano. For the first hour or so, we ride with the main convoy, out of sight of the peloton. Around every corner there's a row of plump Frenchmen with their backs to the road — race officials, sponsors' guests who spend too long in the hospitality village before the start.

Each village we pass through is lined with what appears to be the entire population in the middle of a fine day out: families in their gardens, lovers in arms, nuns in deckchairs.

12.45: We get our first call from team manager Johnny Wertz in the main car. Peter Meinert, the Danish domestique assisting Elomov (the domestiques are the foot soldiers whose work is mostly concerned with getting their leader to the finish) is struggling with a respiratory infection, and we are to stand by to pick him up if he abandons.

Shortly after comes our first big job of the day — collect the pastries and get them to the main car in which Wertz, an addict, is waiting. We reach the main car and I lean out of the window and hand them over in mid-flight.

A race like the Tour relies on teamwork. Chris Maume played his part for a day in the Alps

1.30pm: The field has broken up and we are able to move up to Meinert and Elomov, who has fallen behind Olano and may even have lost the yellow jersey. Then comes the call from Wertz that Meinert is pulling out. Jose slams the car into gear and at once is Michael Schumacher at the first corner of a grand prix. We reach Meinert, Jose dashes out and puts his bike on the roof-rack — and I get my chance by the side of the road. Meinert falls into the back of the car coughing, the haunted look in his eyes is of a man who has just crawled across the Sahara.

The rain sets in, and we move up to hand out plastic capes, following our men Adriano Baffi and Pascal Derames as they work together. The veteran Baffi is having problems, and he motions his team-mate to go on without him.

As the first of the two big climbs approaches, the first category Col de Vars (take it from me, first category is tough), Baffi is in dire straits. We stay with him as makes his painful ascent, each push on the pedal seemingly his last, his call muscles writhing around each other like snakes fighting in a bag, his face crumpling under the strain.

3.30: Baffi gets to the top of the Col de Vars, but we get the call to move forward to support the American and Canadian, Marty Jemison and Tyler Hamilton, who need fluids. As the ascent to the awesome Col d'Izoard looms, I lean as far out of the window as I can without incurring wrath and hand over drinks — water and Coke for Jemison.

supporting our man, Jean-Cyril Robin, who is in Olano's group, and we get the call that Elomov needs help as he tries to claw back his lead. Once again, Jose is Schumacher crossed with James Bond and I am in danger of whiplash as we surge through the field. We reach him as the lower slopes of the Col are kicking in. Elomov is in trouble.

As we ascend, the rain stops, the clouds clear, the riders throw away their capes and misery in the rain becomes wet, misery in the sun. What Baffi was going through, so now is Elomov, his plight made worse by the certain knowledge that the yellow jersey is on his back only in the strictly physical sense. His fight makes competing watching, even given the distractions of the astonishing lunar scenery. As we near the peak the fans crowd in, manic and wild-eyed.

4.15: Elomov goes over the top and picks up speed. Descents are the real stuff of bike races. For the drivers, that is. Give them an open road, a few hairpins and any excuse and they are unleashed, their cars running on high-octane testosterone. Not content with flinging the car about like a demented dog, Jose is yelling "Allez, Elzi!" — the only bit of French I remember where the Spanish is for "brown trousers".

The end is only 10 miles away, and Elomov finishes more than three minutes down on Olano. But for a neophyte like me, the entry into Briançon is triumphal, and as we proceed through the old city, up the Grande Garouille, a narrow, ancient, cobble street with a fierce slope, the crowd is a car's breadth apart. As I open the window to taste the atmosphere, the sound rushes in like a slap in the face. Then it's on to the finish, where I leap out on a glorious high. I quickly have to rein myself in, though — with US Postal's yellow jersey lost going into the final day — the mood is somber. But not mine...

The main car is near the front

FOUR RIDERS TO FOLLOW

ABRAHAM OLANO (Sp)
Born: 22.1.1970
Spain's answer to Armstrong. Olano, when Miguel Indurain, was the world road champion, was the most successful Spanish cyclist in the world. He won the Tour de France in 1994 and 1995, and the Vuelta a España in 1994 and 1995. He is currently in the yellow jersey.

RICHARD VIRENQUE (Fr)
Born: 19.12.1969
French cyclist who won the Tour de France in 1996. He is currently in the yellow jersey.

LAURENT JALABERT (Fr)
Born: 30.11.1968
Former Tour de France winner who won the Tour de France in 1993. He is currently in the yellow jersey.

CHRIS BOARDMAN (GB)
Born: 19.12.1969
British cyclist who won the Tour de France in 1995. He is currently in the yellow jersey.

WEEKEND FIXTURES

Today
Rugby Union
THIRD TEST MATCH: South Africa v British Isles (4.15) at Ellis Park, Johannesburg.
INTERNATIONAL MATCH: USA v Wales (12.0) at Warrington, North Carolina.
Rugby League
STORM SUPER LEAGUE: Paris v Castleford (7.0). First Division: Huddersfield v Hull (3.0).
Football
under-21 Cup Group Three: And (14.0) at Aachen (17.0). Group Four: Monaco (14.15) at St. Germain (17.0).
World Youth Championship: Czech AL (14.15) at St. Germain (17.0).
Speedway
7.30 unless stated
ELITE LEAGUE: Barnack v Reading (6.30). PREMIER LEAGUE: Barnack v Reading (6.30).

Chris Boardman:
carbon fibre monocoque,
wind tunnel aerodynamics,
remote heart rate monitoring.
And, of course, Jacob's Fig Rolls.

World records, gold medals, yellow jerseys and, of course, the perfect balance of simple and complex carbohydrates for recovery and sustained energy release: Jacob's Fig Rolls.

Pick up a pack of Chris Boardman's favourite energy snack now and you also get a chance to win one of 30 Gary Fisher mountain bikes and thousands of other prizes like Berghaus fleeces and daypacks.

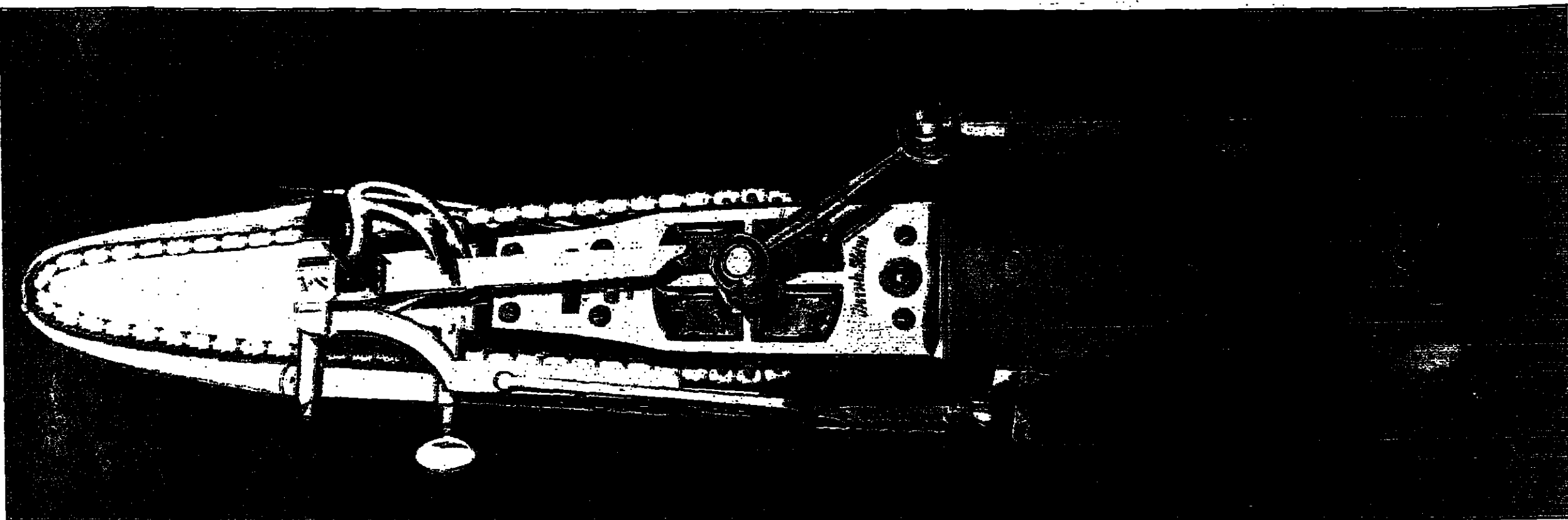
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QUOTES OF THE WEEK

My career was on the line. We got kids to bring up. What else could I do? Mike Tyson, after biting a chunk out of Evander Holyfield's ear.
The first thing that ran across my mind was to bite him back, Holyfield.
Bovens should eat before they fight. Sylvester Stallone, at his side.
I apologise to the world. I only hope that I'm not penalised for this mistake. Tyson, two days after the fight.

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BIGGEST SUPERSTORE IN LANCETER



All cranked up: this 1830s surgical tool, to be auctioned by Christie's South Kensington next Friday, 'went too far, too fast' according to surgeons of the day, it is expected to sell for up to £25,000

Bone up on the chain saw market

Another glass dish of Sir Alexander Fleming's penicillin mould is for sale, this time at Christie's South Kensington, estimated at £6,000 to £8,000. Last March, a similar one, inscribed by the Nobel prizewinner, fetched £23,000 at Sotheby's.

One cannot help wondering whether these neatly boxed specimens are about to become as common at auction as Charlie Chaplin's canes or Queen Victoria's knickers. How many mouldy dishes did the frustrated Fleming press upon sympathetic colleagues in the years between 1928, when he discovered the non-toxic antibiotic, and 1940, when Professor Ernst Chain finally devised a way of manufacturing it?

At least this one has an impressive provenance, having got a mention in Fleming's biography, thus acquiring sensation value. It is almost as sensational as the 1830s hand-cranked surgical chain saw in the same sale of medical instruments as the mould next Friday (10.30am). The contraption avoided the tissue damage caused by to-and-fro sawing but surgeons complained it "went too far, too fast". Estimate: £20,000-£25,000.

Four years ago, in South Ken's first sale of medical instruments, an earlier chain saw, also by Heine of Wurzburg, was

Collect to invest: medical instruments, although gruesome, are gaining popularity, writes John Windsor

bought for £23,100 by the Thackray Medical Museum in Leeds. Since that sale, museums and fascinated medics have bought medical instruments at South Ken twice a year, making it a modestly rewarding field for investment. About 60 per cent of buyers are private collectors; some 30 per cent of the lots go to the United States and 20 per cent to Europe.

Not everybody hankers after a dish of mould or a surgical chain saw, especially at those prices, but both are clues to the way the medical instrument market works. The earlier chain saw, though less sophisticated, was the more decorative: it had ivory handles secured with gilt-brass bands. Buyers favour the decorative.

But those gilt-brass bands are the kind of hidey-holes that infectious bugs love. Such charming but potentially lethal decoration tailed off around 1830-40 when Joseph Lister's pronouncements on antiseptic surgery began to be taken seriously. Author and dealer Elisabeth Bennion, who has written the three definitive books on medical instruments, says she seldom deals in post-Lister instruments.

Fleming revered Lister's antiseptic research. So, in a sense, his dish of anti-septic could be seen as a market spoiler. Modern surgical instruments – unadorned, stainless, easily sterilised – are not as desirable as, say, the iron 17th-century German boy's saw with carved ivory eagle's head handle, estimated £3,000-£4,000 next Friday.

Sensation and decoration are valuable selling points, especially in combination. Both the chain saw and the eagle's head saw will hold their value as talking points. These days, it is increasingly difficult to buy sensational but not uncommon 19th-century ivory-handled tooth keys (one twist, and it's out) for under £200 and prices are rising steadily. Do dentists brandish them at their dinner parties as the sugary desserts are served? And whoever paid £322 at South Ken last December for a gruesome Victorian oak mortuary trolley must be having hours of fun.

For under £300, to amuse, amaze or horrify your friends, you could buy at South Ken next Friday a human foetal skull, a French glass breast pump, a

Chinese ivory anatomical model of a woman, a cased post-mortem set including hammer and chisel to sever joints, or a veterinary lamb castrator.

One London dealer in scientific and medical instruments, Peter Delehar, organiser of the annual International Scientific and Medical Instrument Fair, refuses to have surgical tools in his shop. "They make me feel uncomfortable," he says. His stock is strong on ingenious ophthalmic devices such as, for £190, a unique Dunn's colour blindness test of 1890 consisting of coloured glass discs back-lit by a candle and a hand-held colour chart. Puzzle: do the colour-blind see illuminated and printed colours differently?

In this market, there is surprisingly little "cross-over" value – that is, prices hiked by competitive bidding between medical collectors and, say, collectors of silver, porcelain, glass or antiques. Many of Mr Delehar's and Mrs Bennion's customers are strictly medical specialists. A GP who collects baby-feeding devices, for example, might prefer a curio that is

a missing link in the evolution of baby feeding to an expensive 18th-century silver one by Paul Storr (if he ever made any).

Mrs Bennion reports that specialist interest in antique stethoscopes and hearing trumpets is pushing up their value. They are popular retirement and birthday presents, often beautifully crafted and do not challenge the squeamish.

You would not expect paying £5,000-£10,000 retail for a fine-condition cylindrical wooden stethoscope by the instrument's French inventor, Laennec, who taught himself wood turning in Napoleonic times. The price 10 years ago was about £6,000.

At £150, a humble 1890s wooden conversation tube (ear trumpet) would be good value. Or invest £300-£500 next Friday in a silver-plated London-dome trumpet with fancy scrolled grille.

As for antiquarian medical instruments, they are cheap and, according to London antiques dealer Chris Martin, as yet undiscovered by medics. He will sell you a 14cm long Roman 1st to 3rd century AD bronze spatula for £60.

Americans are going for Civil War cases of surgeons' instruments – the first-ever standard issue. Some collectors are hoarding them. Ten years ago they were £750-

£800, now they are around £1,200 and still rising. Christie's South Ken auctioneer Mark James reports consistently strong demand for 19th-century cases of surgeons' instruments: they have risen about 30 per cent in value in four years. Next Friday's sale has amputation sets with estimates between £300 and £800. Do not try these at home.

As if cued by *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, many collectors see medical instruments, notably the obstetric and gynaecological, as the history of thought materialised. In Victorian times, anaesthesia delivered childbirth into the hands of the surgeon as well as the local midwife. Fearsome cervical dilators and forceps (under £200 a set in Friday's sale) were wielded by men who were familiar with the 19th-century pathologist - Virchow's opinion that "woman is a pair of ovaries with a human being attached, whereas man is a human being furnished with a pair of testes".

Christie's South Kensington (0171-581 7611), International Scientific and Medical Instrument Fair, Radisson Portman Hotel, Portman Square, London W1, 26 October (10am-4pm), entry £3. Peter Delehar (0171-727 9860), Elisabeth Bennion (0181-543 0043), Chris Martin (0181-382 1509/4359).

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Arena special: Richard Edmondson imagines the spectres of Wimbledon past from the dilapidated terrace of the superseded No 1 Court

Photograph: David Ashdown

Shroud covers the court of dreams



It may have been a painful exercise to occupy the new Court No 1 on Thursday as our boys baled out lamely, but that was nothing compared with seeing the damaged skeleton of the original arena yesterday.

What remains behind high doors at the All England Club is a pit where once there was a temple to the highest drama of Wimbledon. A wounding reminder of great days past comes in the waves of applause from the Centre Court as you survey the cabins, water tanks and building material lying in such haphazard order it appears they have been thrown to their

Richard Edmondson takes a fond last look at the now dismantled old No 1

location by floodwater. There remain vestiges of times past: the scoreboard operator's hut, teak benches that have seen some services, and the open west terrace still on its way to the stars.

There is also a clear view over to the new No 1, the so-called younger brother of the Centre Court, and the mourning of a passing can largely be erased by the sight of its functional replacement. They are bonded by the decoration of a simple purple and dark green drape. The one at the old court lies like a memorial shroud over the old ramps, while the other has the christening sense of a sheet at the car showroom.

The patina of grass has long

been removed from the old surface and transplanted at Eastbourne. We will have to wait until next summer to discover if the courts at the East Sussex resort start taking on the characteristics of the All-England Club. Meanwhile, it is not difficult to imagine the ghosts and spectres of those who once danced in the arena.

Those were the days when the Bradford & Bingley tennis, having played down in the past, had elsewhere, tried their luck with umbrellas in hand one rain-threatened afternoon. It was pulled on his headband, not least the time in 1981 when he opined towards an umpire: "You are the pits." John McEnroe added that umpire and referee were "two bumps on a log". Then the audience was told to dismiss itself. "I am so disgusting you shouldn't watch," McEnroe said. "Everybody leave."

McEnroe and Becker were among the parade of multiple champions at the launch of the new No 1, and though the lawn may only be 12 days old there is already enough for an appendix to the history book.

Those still consuming the petits fours and draining the cafeiere well into the afternoon have missed the sight of Tim Henman's successful arena

Oh I say

Richard Edmondson delves into his notes for the pearls of wisdom that missed the newspapers first time around

I was asked and I thought, well, I don't seem to have anything better to do. Tim Henman on his burning desire to address the Fourth Estate during a rain break on the first Friday.

Q: Tim, who is Holly McGuire?

A: I'm quite happy to keep her to myself, thanks.

Q: What is the general opinion in the men's locker room of Anna Kournikova?

A (Henman): From what we've been able to see, she's obviously tickled a lot of your fancies.

Q (to Kournikova): Your next opponent is Barbara Rittner. Have you ever played her?

A: No, I've played her once in doubles.

Q: Is your boyfriend here or is he not coming?

A: I'm single.

Q: You're not going out with him?

A: I'm single. Kournikova before a tryst with Sergei Fedorov of the Detroit Red Wings in the players' restaurant.

Q: What's your previous grass court experience?

A: I've played Queen's twice. I lost to Petr Korda first round and this year I lost to Florin first round. Last week I qualified in Nottingham and lost first round to Scott Draper. So I can't say it's unbelievably positive.

Q: What about as a junior?

A: I played the juniors once and lost second round.

Q: Did you play Newport?

A: I played last year and lost first round to Rafter. So not the best record. Justin Gimelstob outlining his impressive grass pedigree after beating Gustavo Kuerten.

Q: I've read that your father is from Louisiana like I am. Where in Louisiana is he from?

A: Shreveport, where are you from?

A: New Orleans.

Q: That's down south? Venus Williams, suggesting her tennis is better than her geography.

Q: Four players were quoted as saying you weren't very friendly and that was going to be a problem. Does that bother you?

A: I don't hold great conversations. Actually I don't hold conversations at all. Venus the gregarious.

Q: How long do you keep the beads in?

A: Five or six weeks.

Q: And do you do any shampoo, or anything special?

A: You just wash right through the beads.

Q: Regular shampoo?

A: Yes. Scaring insight into the Williams lifestyle.

Q: What woman player in tennis history do you admire?

A: I really haven't seen too much tennis in the past. Disgenuous Venus part I.

Q: How did your parents come to pick Venus as your Christian name?

A: You'd have to ask my mother. I don't know. Disgenuous Venus part II.

Q: How would you celebrate if you won Wimbledon?

A: I wouldn't have time to celebrate because I would be too busy putting together my movie about the biggest underdog to win. Nicole Arendt, a third-round victim to Monica Seles, on the film that was never made.

Q: If you could invite anybody in the world to sit in the players' box to watch you play, who would it be?

A: Mother Nature. Arendt again.

A: Travis Knight of the LA Lakers. Lindsay Davenport A: Madonna. Jana Novotna.

Q: If you were a first-time Wimbledon fan, how long would you wait in a queue to get in?

A: I would wait for ever. I would sleep in a tent. I would do anything if that was the only way to get into Wimbledon. Martina Hingis.

A: You've got to be kidding. Arendt.

Q: What's the one thing that is most misunderstood about you?

A: That I am a very nice person. Novotna.

Q: Where does this rank as far as your career is concerned?

A: It could be my biggest win, a match as huge as that on Centre Court at Wimbledon with the crowd going bananas and flashes going on a bit like a pop concert. Todd Woodbridge after defeating Michael Chang.

Q: Do you feel sorry for Clare?

A: Yes, I feel a little bit sorry for her but I was trying not to be on the court pretty long. Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario after her emphatic 6-0, 6-0 victory over Clare Wood.

Q: Did you know you are the first British woman qualifier to win a match at Wimbledon since 1976?

A: Am I really, wow.

Q: The last one was Karen Mulworth, who was also from Devon. Have you had any contact with her?

A: What's her name?

Q: Karen Mulworth.

A: Never heard of her. Karen Cross showing West Country solidarity after her defeat of Linda Wild.

Familiar faces head for final

GUY HODGSON



Gigi Fernandez and Natasha Zvereva, who were once to Wimbledon's women's doubles title what cream is to strawberries made it to the semi-finals yesterday to encourage thoughts of a fourth championship.

The top seeds, winners in 1992, 1993 and 1994 and who collected six successive Grand Slam titles in the early 90s, defeated Mary Joe Fernandez and Lisa Raymond 5-7, 6-4, 6-4, but the woman who faced them in all three of their successful finals will not be around to resist them.

Jana Novotna withdrew from the event yesterday as a precaution for today's singles final.

The Czech, with Lindsay Davenport the third seeds, has a slight strain of the right hamstring and decided to pull out at the quarter-final stage, allowing the 12th-seeded Sabine Appelmans and Miriam Oremans a walkover.

Hannah Collin, who at 15 is the girl most likely to lead British women's tennis beyond the millennium, moved into the last eight of the 18 and under Girls Championship with a 6-1, 6-4 win over Japan's Rika Fujiwara.

Home interest in the Boys' singles ended in a familiar manner, however, when the top seed, Germany's Daniel Elsner, defeated Adrian Barnes

6-2 6-1. Shades of Michael Stich and Tim Henman.

In Germany, there was a widespread sense of shock to the news that Boris Becker has played his last Wimbledon. "Becker was the heart of our tennis," one newspaper wrote. "Boris was passion, excitement, fascination."

Becker said on German television that he was relieved to have put the decision behind him and now planned to concentrate on his family.

"Now I'd like to have a bigger family," he said. "Three, four children - however, it's not all up to me." Becker and his wife, Barbara, have a three-year-old son, Noah.

Becker said that he had been preparing his announcement

since being defeated in the first round at the Australian Open in January.

"My wife knew I want to quit since the Grand Slam tournament in Melbourne," he said. "Then I told her: 'Girl, now we have to show that we can somehow make it over the next six months to Wimbledon, because I can't go on like this.'"

Mark Petchey, who reached the third round at Wimbledon before losing to Boris Becker, heads the entry list for the Challenger tournament starting at Bristol on Monday. Five other British players - Nick Neal, a surprise finalist last year, Jamie Delgado, Luke Milligan, Danny Sapsford and Colin Beecher - are all in the main draw.

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at Wimbledon now?"
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sport

Seve slumps but Olazabal survives

Golf

ANDY FARRELL
reports from
Druid's Glen, Co Wicklow

It is always distracting, when you are battling to make the cut yourself, to be playing with someone who cannot find the mown parts of the golf course. At least, in Jose Maria Olazabal, Seve Ballesteros had someone who is sympathetic to his plight and confident in his own abilities to survive the half-way cut in the Murphy's Irish Open.

While Ballesteros slumped, without having to face the bowling of Shane Warne, to an out-

ward half of 41 and eventually finished at 11 over, his countryman found three birdies on the back nine just when he needed them.

Olazabal faced missing the cut for the first time since his return to the tour in February when he double-bogeyed the par-five fifth. His drive ended in a bush and he was forced to take a penalty drop, but the story of his problems for two days here concerns more his lack of fortune on the greens. After a birdie-four at the 11th, the Basque finally holed a couple of 12-15 footers at the next two holes to qualify for the weekend at three over.

He was not the only star to

struggle. Bernhard Langer crashed to eight over, while Nick Faldo was four over for the day before back-to-back birdies at the 15th and 16th brought him back to level par. Sweden's Michael Jonzon made a sizeable advance with a new course record of 64, one better than Lee Westwood's effort of the day before, which included five birdies in a row.

Westwood maintained his lead with a 69, but in common with the others on the leaderboard overnight he did not find life easy until he birdied four of the last eight holes. Thomas Bjorn, at six under with Jonzon, was two back after a 70, the same score as Colin Montgomerie, who is four adrift.

The testing nature of this Druid's Glen course has seen only a handful of players finish under par for two rounds and Costantino Rocca was not one of them. The Italian double-bogeyed the 18th for the second day running when his approach shot hit a tree 20 yards ahead of him and rebounded into the pond in front of the green.

Rocca then hurled his club into the tree, from which he needed his driver to extract it. "It was a four-iron," said his Irish caddy, "which then became a tree-iron."

Scores, Digest, page 28



Colin Montgomerie lines up a putt on the 17th at Druid's Glen yesterday

Photograph: Andrew Reddington/Allsport

O'Meara shades Woods

Mark O'Meara narrowly upstaged his friend and neighbour, Tiger Woods, to take the first-round lead at the Motorola Western Open in Lemont, Illinois, on Thursday night.

O'Meara made a fine birdie at his final hole to shoot a six-under-par 66 in a testing wind on the highly rated Cog Hill course on the outskirts of Chicago. He enjoyed a one-stroke advantage over Woods, Phil Blackmar, Jim Furyk and Dave Stockton Jr.

Ben Crenshaw, the winner of

the US Masters only two years ago, has pulled out of the Open Championship, which takes place at Troon in two weeks' time, while another former Masters champion, Fuzzy Zoeller, has decided not to try to qualify.

A toe injury and his father's poor health have forced Crenshaw out of an event in which he has twice finished runner-up. Along with Zoeller, fellow-Americans Robert Gomez and Duffy Waldorf have also withdrawn from final qualifying.

Doohan dips below Checa after wobble

Motorcycling

Michael Doohan survived a scare in yesterday's practice for the San Marino Grand Prix at Imola, and had to settle for provisional second place on the grid behind Spain's Carlos Checa.

The defending world 500cc champion lost control of his Honda on a left-hand bend as he tried to pass a slower rider. He careered off the track, sped down a grass verge towards a perimeter wall before he bailed the bike back on to the tarmac.

Doohan thought the mistake happened as he pressed for a leading time. "Because I was getting a bit frustrated I turned on the gas rather aggressively and ran off the track," he said. Doohan, aiming for his fourth consecutive world title and his seventh victory of the season, recorded 1min 49.755sec, 0.381 seconds slower than Checa, also on a Honda, who lapped Imola's recently remodified circuit in 1:49.374.

Anthony Gobert was third on a Suzuki in 1:50.096 with Nobutsu Aoki, on a Honda, fourth. Qualifying times, Digest, page 28

Castleford in last-chance brasserie

Rugby League

DAVE HADFIELD

The Bradford Bulls might be charging away with the Stones Super League title, but there are still matches of great significance this weekend, starting today in the contrasting surroundings of Huddersfield and Paris.

At the Charley stadium this evening, Castleford have a chance – conceivably their last – to climb out of last place in the table, provided they beat Paris by enough. If they lose, there will be a four-point gap between the two sides and life will look precarious in the extreme.

On top of their injury list

for one of the code's traditional heartland clubs.

At Huddersfield this afternoon, Hull can ensure that it will be they who will replace whoever drops out of the top division. Despite their shabby performance against Featherstone last week, they should seize the opportunity at the second time of asking. Victory for Huddersfield, on the other hand, would leave them with a lingering hope of snatching the prize.

It is a mark of St Helens' decline that it will be a major surprise tomorrow if they slow down Bradford's progress towards replacing them as champions. On top of their injury list

and the general loss of confidence, Saints will be without the suspended Derek McVey and, without any title aspirations of their own, might experiment with team selection.

Leeds, with second place to play for when they meet Salford, will be without Francis Cummings for six weeks and Barrie McDermott, who broke his leg against Halifax on Wednesday night, for considerably longer. Graham Hoyland, who has been transfer-listed this week, will continue to train and play for Leeds while other clubs take note of his availability. Salford are showing a keen interest in Oldham's David Bradbury.

Something will have to give at Warrington, where the arrival of Halifax brings together two sides with long losing runs. Warrington must find replacements for Kelly Shefford and Nigel Vagana, both suspended for two matches for a spear tackle, while Halifax hope to have their hooker Paul Rowley back after a knee injury.

The game breaks new ground with Oldham, unable to use Boundary Park because of re-seeding, taking a match to Hyde for the first time. Defeat for Oldham by Sheffield Eagles could leave them just one point above the two bottom clubs, if Castleford were to win in Paris.

Bridge and Parish defy the doubters

Rowing

HUGH MATHESON
reports from Henley

Henley repaid the faithful with a series of great contests to grace the sunshine and fast tailwind conditions which transformed yesterday's racing after the grim and grey opening two days.

The pretenders to Stephen Redgrave's crown are crowding into the Silver Goblet event for coxless pairs, which he has vacated after seven wins. Peter Bridge and Matthew Parish who finished extended careers in the British Elite in Atlanta, were thought to be vulnerable to a lack of training. They were led by the Queen's Tower pair of the two Jeremys, Hepworth and Purnell, for the entire course until a sustained attack up the enclosures provoked poor steering from Queen's Tower, allowing Bridge and Parish to sneak through on the last stroke to win by one foot.

The Queen Mother Cup for the quadruple sculls produced a thriller when the British under-23 national crew faced their senior counterparts. The seniors, racing as Kingston and Tideway Scullers, led throughout, but

not by much. With both crews warned for wandering out of their lanes, it came to a final sprint won by the juniors only three strokes from the line.

The strongest challenge in the other half of the draw comes from the Augusta sculling camp. The only medal for the American men in Atlanta came in this event and Augusta now has the pick of the available talent. Stroked by the silver medalist Brian Jamieson, they swept aside Melbourne University, led by the 1992 Olympic champion, Peter Anthony.

In the Diamond sculls, The American, Jamie Kovey, made light work of his quarter-final with Steve Tucker, while Greg Searle's rival today was made to work hard by the Dutchman, Ardi Middag. Searle took the early lead, which was eroded in the mid-race before he pushed clear at the three-quarter mile.

In the women's sculls, Guine Batten faced her biggest domestic rival, the 4th, 13th Sarah Winkless, who allowed her inexperience to show when she stopped after a crash shortly after the start, giving Batten enough room to win as she pleased.

Results, Digest, page 28

Welsh hopes are dashed by England

Bowls

Wales saw their hopes of recapturing the Home International Championship dashed in Worthing yesterday when they fell to England in their concluding match of the series.

Wales, who had a 100 per cent record after wins over Scotland, Ireland and the Channel Islands, still needed a win

to stop Scotland retaining the title they won in Ireland 12 months ago.

But England held on for a 10-shot victory. Both sides finished with three winning rinks but the decisive result was David Ward's 27-10 win over Robert Weale. Danny Denison added a 25-18 victory over Will Thomas and David Cudger edged out Dai Wilkins 23-21. The Welsh wins came from

Spencer Wilshire, who beat Andy Thomson 24-15, John Price, who defeated a 24-20 winner over Lee Miller, and Mark Anstey, who edged out world champion Tony Alcock 19-16. Ireland finished on a high when they crushed the Channel Islands 143-87. The Channel Islands' consolation victory came from David Le Marquand, who beat Noel Graham 19-15.

"They weren't many people who gave us much of a chance after our defeat to Wales on Tuesday, but we've showed some real character," the Scottish team manager, Gordon Neil, said.

"We've picked up 42 of an available 44 points from our last two games and it's that sort of team spirit that's seen us through. I am proud of every one of them."

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CARLISLE

HYPERION

6.40 Risky Girl 7.10 Winter Scout 7.40 Euro Seppie 8.10 Silver Pearl 8.40 Tropical beach 9.10 Watch The Fire

GOING: Good to Soft

STALLS: 6f - 10f - 12f - 14f - 16f - 18f - 20f - 22f - 24f - 26f - 28f - 30f - 32f - 34f - 36f - 38f - 40f - 42f - 44f - 46f - 48f - 50f - 52f - 54f - 56f - 58f - 60f - 62f - 64f - 66f - 68f - 70f - 72f - 74f - 76f - 78f - 80f - 82f - 84f - 86f - 88f - 90f - 92f - 94f - 96f - 98f - 100f

WOLVERHAMPTON

HYPERION

6.30 Walls Court 7.00 Northern Optimist 7.30 Crookhampton 8.00 Global Dancer 8.30 Hurdle 9.00 Fenian Court

GOING: Good to Soft (Heavy patches)

STALLS: 6f - 10f - 12f - 14f - 16f - 18f - 20f - 22f - 24f - 26f - 28f - 30f - 32f - 34f - 36f - 38f - 40f - 42f - 44f - 46f - 48f - 50f - 52f - 54f - 56f - 58f - 60f - 62f - 64f - 66f - 68f - 70f - 72f - 74f - 76f - 78f - 80f - 82f - 84f - 86f - 88f - 90f - 92f - 94f - 96f - 98f - 100f

8.40 NOVICE AUCTION STAKES (CLASS F) £3,300 added 2YO 6f

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7.40 HANDICAP (CLASS F) £3,500 added 2m

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7.30 MAIDEN HURDLE (CLASS F) £2,575 added 3m 1f

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6.30 HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS F) £3,200 added 2m

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7.30 HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS F) £3,200 added 2m

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Holyfield spurns chance to bite back

Boxing

Last week's dental debate continues to exercise the imagination of the American public, and Evander Holyfield chose the nation's most public forum, David Letterman's *Late Show* on CBS television, to air his views.

"When Mike Tyson bit you on the ear, what was your reaction?" Letterman asked him. The world heavyweight champion, his right ear still held together by stitches, said: "The first thing that ran across my mind was to bite him back."

The only thing that held him back, he said, was the pain he felt from the unexpected attack.

"They usually hit you low, behind the head," he said, "but not biting. To do that, that's one of the lowest things you can do. That was the reason I jumped up and down and almost had a fit."

Was Tyson crazy, Letterman wondered? "No," not really, Holyfield said. "I think he lost his composure. What happened opened people's eyes about how much pressure can happen when things are not going your way. Anytime you're accustomed to winning and it comes to a point where you meet your match, something like that can happen."

Holyfield said boxers need good temperaments to succeed. "That's the only thing that keeps you from losing," he said. "To lose it like that, that's not normal."

Holyfield is heading for Africa, then plans on some rest and relaxation, watching his children running on the track. He will fight again, probably in November.

When he does, it will be without the tip of his right ear. Recovered temporarily, it was lost again on the trip to the hospital. "Someone stole it," Holyfield said.

That set Letterman to thinking out loud about the places Holyfield's ear tip might have wound up. "It would be a lowly addition to a charm bracelet," he said. "It might be floating in somebody's drink."

Then Letterman decided to live a little dangerously. He cocked his head over-shoulder, his right ear tantalisingly tilted toward Holyfield. "Go ahead," he said, fetchingly. "Take a bite."

For a tense moment, Holyfield moved towards Letterman, his mouth open, his teeth poised. Then, thankfully for all concerned, he pulled back.

"Were you thinking about it?" Letterman wondered. Holyfield, an honest man, grinned broadly. "Yes," he said. "I was."

Bodyguard bounces back to form

Bodyguard, almost put over the rails during a rough climax to the Norfolk Stakes, got back on the winning trail with success at Sandown yesterday.

Unbeaten going into Royal Ascot, the son of Zafonic could finish only fourth behind Tippit Boy after he was badly impeded as the race hotted up.

But he found consolation in the three runner Wates Centenary Dragon Stakes getting the better of Queen Mary Stakes third Daunting Lady in the Listed event.

Pat Eddery set a slow early pace on Daunting Lady until quickening the tempo at halfway, but Bodyguard edged in front just over a furlong out

and held the advantage to the line by a neck.

"That doesn't make up for Ascot but it's some consolation," reflected trainer Paul Cole. "We looked at the July Stakes but we wanted him to win and then go on to the Richmond Stakes at Goodwood."

"Time will tell us how good he is and we will wait and see how the winner of the Norfolk Stakes performs when he runs again. This was a funny race. They only went a routine canter to start with. Pat tried to be very clever and nearly got away with it. If he'd gone all the way he would have played right into our hands."

Cole plans to aim Chesham Stakes winner Central Park at the Champagne Stakes during Glorious Goodwood. Central Park defeated Cape Verde who had accounted for Mubthahir on her debut at Newmarket.

Mubthahir continued to frank the form when returning for the second of three scheduled visits to Sandown to land the Pillar Property Investments Stakes.

Winner of a maiden on his last start at the track, he continued his progress by making all to beat Classic Manoeuvre by nine lengths. His trainer John Gosdon is planning a return to the track at the end of August for the Solario Stakes.

SANDOWN

2.00: 1. SALLY GREEN (4f) 9.2 - J. Price 22
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WARWICK

2.15: 1. COME TOGETHER (5f) 9.2 - J. Price 22
2. 415 ARDEN (4f) 9.2 - J. Price 22
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RACING RESULTS

4.55: 1. SPECULATOR (4f) 9.2 - J. Price 22
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sport

False dawn exposed by Warne

Cricket
JON CULLEY

After the breathless drama of Edgerton and the unanswered questions of Lord's, this threat to be the moment that sees English cricket facing a change of false euphoria.

On a day of rare sunshine in this dank summer, the harsh chill of reality made an unwelcome comeback. At first, once the embers of Australia's innings had been briskly extinguished, a Manchester crowd eager to witness more English glory witnessed a classic war of attrition the home side seemed to be winning.

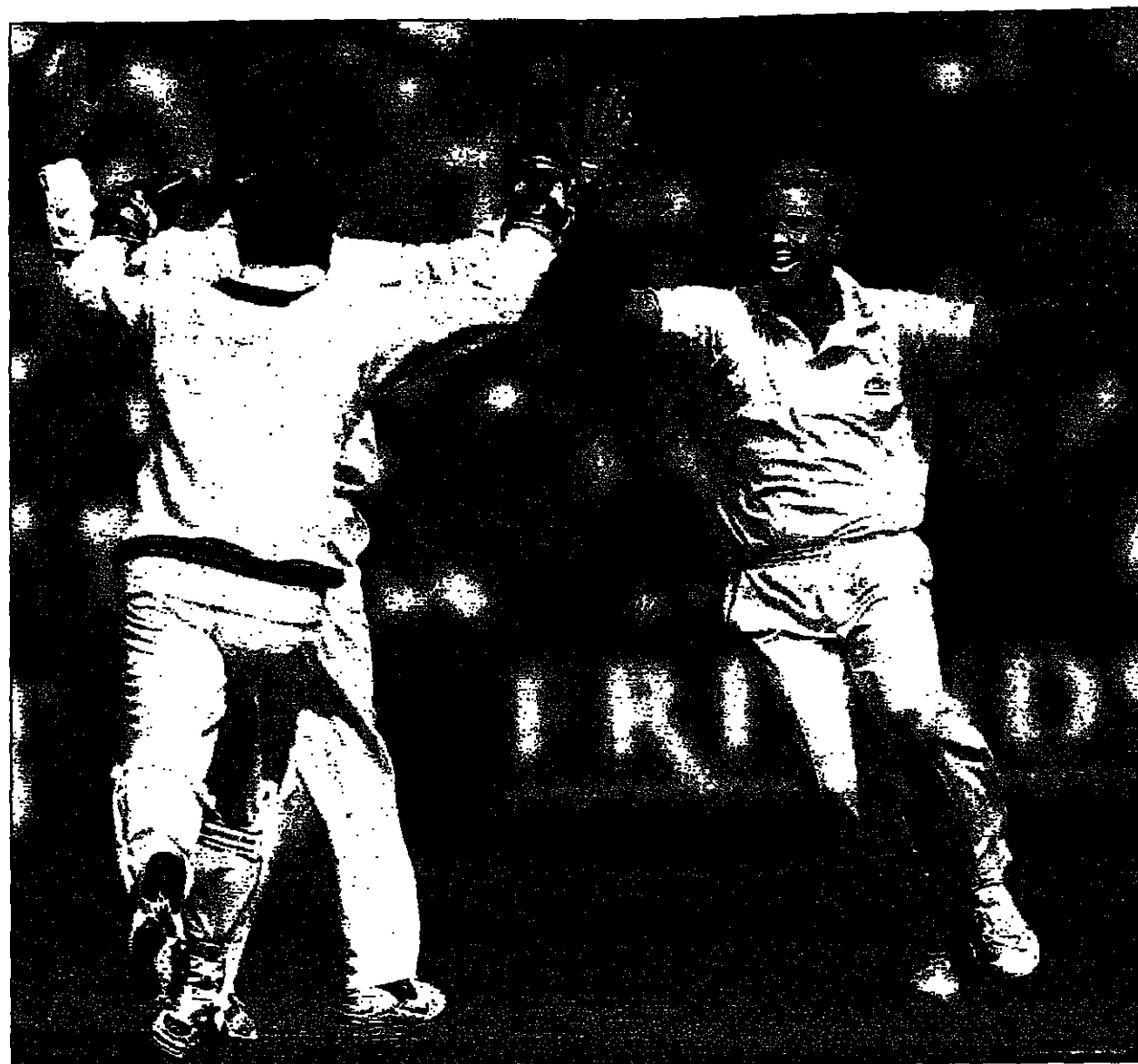
The pitch had lost a good deal of Thursday's spice but England were not to be tempted into any liberties. Despite Michael Atherton's early departure, at 74 for 1 everything seemed to be going swimmingly. Then came the unpleasant realisation that the re-assessment of Shane Warne, those confident assertions that he was no longer the feared phenomenon of old, were somewhat wide of the mark. His very first delivery, turning sharply out of the rough, instantly recalled the so-called ball from Hell with which he announced himself here four years ago.

Perhaps it let loose demons in the minds of the England batsmen, for they never again played with their initial assurance. The exception was Mark Butcher, who secured his place in this match with his 87 at Lord's and now added a half-century of not inconsiderable merit, an essay of studied defence and impeccable judgement.

One lost count of the number of subtle "leaves" as the Australian pace trio sought in vain to induce a false stroke. It was well into the afternoon before Butcher allowed himself the liberty of a hook, so often the shot of his undoing in the past. Indeed, it was an innings marred only by his one error.

The Surrey left-hander can look forward to the remainder of the series without anxiety now – and it took a brilliant piece of work by Ian Healy to ensure the one mistake was costly. It was the critical dismissal of the day and happened to be the 100th in Ashes Tests by the 33-year-old Australian wicketkeeper, a milestone achieved before him only by Rodney Marsh and Alan Knott, in whose company he is by no means out of place.

Healy, in his way, is a model Australian cricketer, resolute, gutsy, fiercely patriotic and combative to a degree that tends to



Australia's Shane Warne celebrates taking the wicket of Nasser Hussain at Old Trafford yesterday. Photograph: Allsport

overstep the mark from time to time. He hungers for Australian success and no one among the present generation of players has better epitomised the spirit of his country's cricket. His stumping

of Butcher clearly delighted him, and he celebrated with a skip and a jump, clapping his gloves together as he ran to congratulate Michael Bevan, for whom the wicket was a welcome

but rare moment of pleasure this summer. But it is when Warne is bowling that Healy comes into his own. If anyone can pick the flippers and the wrong 'uns and

every other weapon in the golden-haired leg-spinner's armoury, it is Healy, whose skill and agility behind the stumps have been vital elements of Warne's success.

Artisan Healy the spinner's best friend

Henry Blofeld highlights a wonderful piece of skill by Australia's wicketkeeper that caused Mark Butcher's downfall

The most brilliant piece of cricket on a day of deep disappointment for England was provided by Ian Healy. Australia's magnificent and perhaps underrated wicketkeeper.

His legside stumping of Mark Butcher was an act which no keeper at any time could have bettered and only a handful could have equalled.

Michael Bevan came on at the Stretford End to bowl his left-arm spin. First, Butcher drove him through the offside for two to reach an excellent fifty. In his mind, Butcher may still have been celebrating when he received a full toss down the legside. He tried to glance it, more than hit it, full away to the off and missed altogether.

The ball pitched in the crease which always makes it difficult for the wicketkeeper. Healy, whose footwork is as quick and sure as Alan Knott's was, moved quickly across to the legside. His glove work is no worse than Knott's either and he took the ball smoothly in both hands and had the balls off in a flash. Butcher was comfortably out of his crease although the third umpire was called in to adjudicate. It was a moment of pure genius.

Later, Healy held two sharp catches off Shane Warne which many keepers might have missed. He not only has the safe-

pair of hands but his anticipation is also brilliant. He always seems to be on the move but never in the wrong place when it matters. Warne owes a lot to Healy, who reads his spin perfectly and has been responsible for many of his wickets, and not just those who he has caught and stumped. They think twice about leaving their crease and going down the pitch to Warne because they fear the man behind them.

As a result of this, batsmen have often been more hesitant than they should be to take the ball to Warne and rest the initiative from him. In persuading the batsmen not to leave their crease in this way, Healy has undoubtedly helped turn Warne into an even more dangerous bowler. It is easier to dominate when you know you are unlikely to be attacked.

It is impossible not to compare Warne and Healy with left-arm spinner Derek Underwood and Knott in the late 60s and 70s. Underwood would be the first to admit that Knott's very presence made him a better bowler. Another by-product of a combination of wicketkeeper and spinner like these two examples is that they provide wonderful entertainment. Anyone who saw Healy stump Butcher will never forget it.

Love and Warren profit

DAVID LLEWELYN

reports from Maidstone Kent 306 and 99-2 Northamptonshire 84-0 dec

The gloom that has been dogging Northamptonshire this season is not entirely to do with their position – bottom of the County Championship. It is as much to do with the appalling weather that has shadowed them around the country. They have had just 13 uninterrupted days out of 31 and there have been four complete wash-outs.

Before the start of yesterday's curtailed session Rob Bailey and his men had lost 1066 overs in the Championship. By last night that total had increased by a further 64 overs. Bailey is grimly stoical about the situation. "I

think our position in the table is false. We have only been outplayed once this year, against Middlesex at Lord's. The weather has meant we have not been given any chance to get into any kind of form. It is the worst season I can remember."

Yesterday was typical of what has been happening all season. Bright sunshine while the ground is drying out, then the moment the bell sounded to announce the 4.00pm start the clouds arrived like thoroughbreds at the starting line.

They soon had umpire Dickie Bird frowning and the players squinting through the gloom trying to see the ball. The only bright spot was the fact that the Northamptonshire openers, Mal Love and Russell Warren, compiled their highest first-wicket stand of the season in the Championship. They had

passed the previous best of 55 (made against Hampshire a couple of weeks ago) before the declaration bowling began – and mercifully Bailey called the two in when Northamptonshire had moved to within 222 of the Kent first innings.

Both captains had agreed that Kent would set Northamptonshire a target of around 320 – in fact it turned out to be 322 – to win and give them a full day today to try to achieve it. Kent collected the balance in the face of some gentle bowling but at a cost of two wickets, Matthew Walker – desperately in need of Championship runs – for 23 and Matthew Fleming for a quick eight.

Trevor Ward and David Fulton saw them to the finish and, providing the weather holds, then at least a decent finish is in prospect.

Shine strikes to leave Essex in the shade

ROUND-UP

Somerset romped to a 10-wicket win yesterday thanks to Kevin Shine, who took five wickets for 72 runs as Essex slumped to 129 all out. Four overs later it was all over as Michael Burns and Piran Holloway put on the 22 runs necessary to secure victory.

At Trent Bridge, Azhar Mahmood produced a fine all-round display to ensure that Pakistan's opening tour match petered out into a draw against Nottinghamshire. The 21-year-old all-rounder's most significant contribution was an unbeaten 56 which enabled the tourists to scrape past their follow-on target shortly after lunch.

Once that had been achieved, Nottinghamshire had to settle for some batting practice in the afternoon.

terminous sunshine, although Mahmood claimed three victims.

Pakistan had resumed on 71 for five, requiring a further 78 to avoid the follow-on and it was Mahmood, hitting six fours, in his half century who frustrated Nottinghamshire's victory bid, though Mahmood had to keep his cool when Matthew Downman sparked a late flurry of wickets.

Mohammad and Akhtar then teamed up to give Nottinghamshire problems when they settled for some time at the crease. Akhtar's opening burst accounted for Paul Pollard and Tim Robinson, while Mahmood took three wickets. Only Usman Afzaal made the most of the batting practice with 31 and shortly after his departure Nottinghamshire declared at 107 for eight to bring the game to an end.

MIKE CAREY
reports from Leicestershire Leicestershire v Yorkshire

Leicestershire, the champions, have a lot of ground to make up in this year's title race and for the most part they battled with appropriate urgency yesterday, with Darren Maddy and James Whitaker falling just short of worthy hundreds.

So far so good. But the question remained: how do you attempt to win a game that has already lost some eight hours to the weather? Whitaker's options included declaring behind and giving his opening bowlers two bursts with the new ball either side of tea.

Instead he took the old-fashioned approach, based on doubt on the theory that runs

are best made when the going is straightforward, and batted on to overhaul Yorkshire, maybe thinking that their largely out-of-form batsmen would not relish a back-to-the-wall struggle today.

If the ball turns a little more or the bounce becomes lower, so much the better. But yesterday, with the pitch dry and the sun even shining for lengthy periods, batting was a comfortable occupation and Maddy and Whitaker made the most of it in adding 150 in 38 overs.

True, there was a certain amount of playing and missing when the ball was new but Yorkshire did not break through until Ryan Sidebottom, 19 and left-arm fast-medium, marked his first impressive bowl in county cricket by finding a gap between Iain Stutcliffe's bat and pad.

It is a good week for the

families of eminent cricketers. Ryan is the son of Arnie, the former Yorkshire all-rounder. Operating to a full length, he often beat the bat and looks to have genuine pace, which is not common in a bowler of his type. One day Arnie may be known as Ryan's father.

The day belonged to Maddy and Whitaker. Maddy's exemplary technique and consistent flow of runs suggests he ought to make the England A tour this year. If it is true that ability to play on the drive is a sign of pedigree, Maddy certainly has it.

With the ball coming on to the bat, Whitaker found he was able to hit through the line with abandon. He also enjoyed a day when the inside edges missed the leg stump and went for four. The result was 15 fours and a six and, whatever happens now, Yorkshire have a bit of batting to do.

CRICKET SCOREBOARD

Britannia Assurance County Championship	
First day of four: 11.0 over	
Durham v Hampshire	
CHESTER-LE-STREET: No play.	
Essex v Somerset	
CHILTERN: Somerset (24/10) beat Essex (16) by 10 wickets.	
Somerset won 280 (10) D J Robinson 78, P J Prentice 57, 71 D Warr 4-63.	
SOMERSET – First Innings	
Overseas: 248 for 5	
1 D Turner not out	
2 P J Prentice 57	
3 D Warr 4-63	
4 D J Robinson 78	
5 P J Prentice 57	
6 D Warr 4-63	
7 D J Robinson 78	
8 P J Prentice 57	
9 D Warr 4-63	
10 D J Robinson 78	
11 P J Prentice 57	
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25 D J Robinson 78	
26 P J Prentice 57	
27 D Warr 4-63	
28 D J Robinson 78	
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30 D Warr 4-63	
31 D J Robinson 78	
32 P J Prentice 57	
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41 P J Prentice 57	
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47 P J Prentice 57	
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95 P J Prentice 57	
96 D Warr 4-63	
97 D J Robinson 78	
98 P J Prentice 57	
99 D Warr 4-63	
100 D J Robinson 78	

Middlesex – Second Innings	
Overseas: 248 for 5	
1 D Turner not out	
2 P J Prentice 57	
3 D Warr 4-63	
4 D J Robinson 78	
5 P J Prentice 57	
6 D Warr 4-63	
7 D J Robinson 78	
8 P J Prentice 57	
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83 P J Prentice 57	
84 D Warr 4-63	
85 D J Robinson 78	
86 P J Prentice 57	

Lions look to run in a whitewash

Rugby Union

CHRIS HEWITT
reports from Johannesburg

The Lions return to the foot of the mountain at Ellis Park this afternoon and this time, they will have to drag their exhausted limbs up the rockface without the benefit of oxygen. Were it not for the fact that they stand on the brink of a historic rugby achievement, few would give them a price of surviving trial by Springbok for the third week running, especially at altitude on the high veld.

But that is precisely where Martin Johnson and his remarkably cohesive band of brothers do stand, for victory this afternoon would condemn the South Africans to a first whitewash since W E MacLagan's Lions won four Tests off the reel in 1891.

With that glorious carrot dangling before their very eyes, the tourists are more hungry, more motivated than anyone had a right to expect in the light of their series-clinching heroics in Durban last weekend.

"It would be bitterly disappointing to let it slip now," said Lawrence Dallaglio yesterday. "The Boks will take a tremendous amount of beating because they have nothing more to lose on the one hand and a lot to look forward to on the other."

"They face the All Blacks in a fortnight, the players need to stake their claim for a place in that match and a win over us would restore some of their confidence."

"I've never seen a Springbok side anything less than 100 per cent committed and they'll be no different for this one, but the thought of making our little piece of history is the overriding factor that has spurred everyone on this week. It will be hard, perhaps harder than any other match on this tour, but we're up for it."

If the England flanker can reproduce the definitive performance he contributed last weekend and, at the same time, forge an immediate understanding with the promoted Neil Back, the Lions have the weaponry to pressurise a Bokke back row deprived of the services of the injured Ruben Kruger. That in turn would give Mike Catt, Scott Gibbs and Jeremy Guscott an opportunity to stretch their legs in attack and involve John Bentley and

Tony Underwood into the bargain.

"That's the game plan," agreed Guscott, who equals the great Mike Gibson's record of eight Lions caps as a centre when he takes the field in Johannesburg. "It would be nice to think we'll see our backline run some ball, mainly because we want to play in a style the Springboks have not encountered from us so far. It will be difficult, though, having already won the series, this match is a test of our own character as much as anything else."

It will be a test of character for the Boks, too. They have lost Andre Joubert, the Rolfs Royce of full-backs, to a groin injury sustained in training on Thursday - Russell Bennett, a try-scorer in the first match of the rubber in Cape Town, replaces him - and, with Mark Andrews likely to be very conspicuous indeed by his absence from the South African engine room, they are fielding their least prepossessing line-up of the series.

Jim Telfer, the Lions' assistant coach, has no truck with South African problems; in his view, the outcome rests in the hands, or rather the minds, of his own team. "It depends on us," he said. "It's been a big task getting the mental side of things right in the wake of Durban; if you look at the way we played in Welkom on Tuesday, we leaked tries that we simply wouldn't have conceded earlier in the tour when the series was a live issue. But we have a lot of young players, especially in the pack, who should realise that they are only half-way to realising their potential. This will be another instructive experience for them."

As it will be for the whole of Northern hemisphere rugby. To win a series in South Africa is one thing, but to turn over the Boks at Fortress Ellis is something else again. The All Blacks achieved pretty much everything last season, but they did not survive Jo'burg. If the Lions prevail this afternoon, they will deserve to be held in awe.

Martin Johnson has pulled out of the England side to play Australia in Sydney next Saturday. The lock forward had been advised by doctors not to put off any longer the groin operation he had delayed to go on the Lions tour. His replacement is the Coventry lock Danny Grewcock, who recently made his international debut on the tour to Argentina.



Target practice: Neil Jenkins, the Lions' goal-kicker, gets into the groove yesterday at Ellis Park, Johannesburg, for today's third Test

Photograph: Mike Egerton/Empics

Belly-up Springboks racked by unrest

Chris Hewitt finds South Africans struggling to come to terms with defeat

Panic, hysteria, sackcloth and ashes. There is no rational reason why two narrow Test defeats at the hands of Fran Cotton's wonderfully tenacious but necessarily opportunistic Lions should signal South African rugby's descent from the high peaks of heroism into the pits of zeroism, but cold-eyed logic tends to be a scarce commodity when the Springboks go belly-up before the disbelieving eyes of their own supporters.

Twenty-three years ago, Willie John McBride and his British Isles invincibles drove a stake the size of Cleopatra's Needle through the heart of Bokke supremacy, prompting questions in the South African parliament and the famous ministerial delegation to the team dressing-room before the decisive third Test in Port Elizabeth. Cotton, a humble foot soldier back in 1974, has not managed to generate quite the same degree of consternation this time around, but the manager's victorious squad have certainly left their hosts at extreme odds with one another.

Suddenly, the talk is of Springbok vulnerability rather than impregnability. Three Tests into his career as national coach, Caryl du Plessis is being savaged in public by a battalion of talking heads and bad-mouthed in private by a handful of discontented players who question his ability to deliver at the very top level.

Arthur Peterson's managerial performance is being examined in microscopic detail, the South African Rugby Football Union finds itself mocked and abused from all directions and, horror of horrors, there is even a strong groundswell of opinion against the presidential Big Daddy from Johannesburg, Dr Louis Luyt.

With the All Blacks and the Wallabies about to pitch up for the Tri-Nations tournament, the air of pessimism is all-pervasive. Having just lost back-to-back home series for the first time this century - New Zealand won 2-1 here last summer - the South Africans are undergoing one of their periodic bouts of anguished breast-beating and, un-

til they start feeling good about themselves again, not even the murder rate in Johannesburg and the crime explosion in Cape Town will knock the rugby debate off the front pages.

Yet the thread that runs through Springbok rugby history is one of irrepressibility, an ability to recover quickly and completely from setbacks that seemed terminal but soon came to be seen as cathartic. The All Blacks, who arrive in South Africa next week for the 19 July Test at Ellis Park, know that to be the case. As Colin Meads, perhaps the greatest New Zealand forward of all time, said yesterday: "What is happening to South African rugby right now may be just the incentive they need to bounce back."

Meads is quite right, for the Lions' series victory does not make the Boks a bad side; indeed, they possess a full-back, a scrum-half and at least five for-

wards of undisputed world class and, as soon as du Plessis insists on complete control over selection and reintroduces Joel Stranksy and Henric le Roux to the midfield equation, the whole will once again be greater than the sum of its parts.

It is, then, a question of attitude, for in many ways the Boks have been the architects of their own downfall. Their arrogant underestimation of the Lions' capabilities, particularly as a stonewalling defensive unit, led them to abandon the Vision Thing in favour of a ludicrously macho infatuation with physical contact and for all the possession they hoovered up in Durban last weekend - the percentage was something like 75-25 in their favour - the Boks persisted in rumbling straight towards the first-up tacklers. Even had every Lion been taken off on a stretcher by half-time, their opponents would probably

have preferred to run into the referee rather than attack space.

Fortunately from South Africa's point of view, du Plessis understands the need for change, both at the top and throughout the labyrinthine structure of Springbok rugby. "We need to be frank and realise that there are alterations that must be made to playing style and overall approach that cannot happen overnight," he said. "We have to get real. Law changes and the constantly changing way the game is played internationally mean we cannot stand still and just keep doing things the way we always have."

The test is whether the one-time Prince of Wings can bring about that change within a realistic timescale. The Springbok rugby public is not exactly renowned for its patience and self-restraint, and now that Bafana Bafana, the national football team, are beginning to capture the white South African imagination as well as the black, speed is of the essence. Many provincial unions have committed themselves whole-

heartedly to development programmes among the vast non-white population - rugby thrives in the townships of the Eastern Cape and, remarkably enough, there is significant growth of interest in football-crazy Soweto - but the fast-tracking of talented black and coloured players needs to be accelerated if rugby is not to become fossilised as the irrelevant preserve of a tiny elite.

When François Pienaar received the World Cup from Nelson Mandela on that extraordinary day in Johannesburg almost exactly two years ago, the feel-good factor spread across the country like a sea of warm honey; from the opulent vineyards of Stellenbosch to the street corner shebeens of the Sowetan maze, Springbok rugby was something to which a glass could be raised.

There is no earthly reason why the Boks should not revisit those heights, but if they want to do it quickly they will have to show a greater sense of perspective and unity of purpose than they are demonstrating at present.

Morgan fulfils his American dream

Kevin Morgan, the 20-year-old Pontypridd full-back, has completed his rapid rise to the top by becoming the only new cap in the Wales side to meet the United States in the first Test in Wilmington tonight.

"I came on the tour hoping for a couple of games," Morgan said. "When the coach Kevin Bowring told me I was playing I phoned home straight away. It is an incredible feeling to be playing alongside so many established world-class players."

At the other end of the age scale, Nigel Walker is back in favour on the left wing after being overlooked for the Five Nations' Championship.

Gavin Jenkins will play at hooker in the absence of the injured former Wales captain Jonathan Humphries, with Andrew Gibbs packing down at blindside flanker alongside the new captain Gwyn Jones.

The Richmond lock, Steve Atherton, is returning home to South Africa. He and his family have been unable to settle since coming over in January and there have been problems with his salary.

"Steve's contractual demands were not in line with the existing structure for other players," John Kingston, the club's director of rugby, said. "Richmond's success has been built on close, happy sides and as much as I respect his playing ability, no individual is bigger than the team."

WALLES: United States, First Test, Wilmington, North Carolina, midnight tonight. Referee: K. McQuibban (Scotland). Wales: K Morgan (Pontypridd), W Pryor (Llanelli), I Davies (Cardiff), S Thomas (Bridgend), M Walker (Cardiff), A Thomas (Swansea), P Jones (Pontypridd), C Lander (Swansea), J Jenkins (Swansea), J Stranksy (Cardiff), G Jones (Cardiff), L Lewis (Cardiff), D James (Bridgend), I Lewis (Cardiff), A Jones (Cardiff), M Jones (Cardiff), G Jones (Cardiff), T Jones (Cardiff), R Jones (Cardiff).

SOUTH AFRICA v LIONS			
at Ellis Park, Johannesburg			
13 A. Strydom, Northern Transvaal	14 J. Bentley, Gloucestershire	15 N. Jenkins, Gloucestershire	16 P. Morgan, Western Province
17 D. van der Walt, Northern Transvaal	18 J. Guscott, Gloucestershire	19 J. Stranksy, Gloucestershire	20 P. Rossouw, Western Province
21 J. de Beer, Free State	22 M. Catt, Gloucestershire	23 T. Underwood, Gloucestershire	24 J. van der Westhuizen, Northern Transvaal
25 P. du Plessis, Free State	26 L. Telfer, Gloucestershire	27 J. Smith, Gloucestershire	28 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire
29 J. Thornton, Griqualand West	30 P. Wallwork, Gloucestershire	31 M. Johnson, Gloucestershire	32 H. Snyders, Northern Transvaal
33 J. Otto, Northern Transvaal	34 J. Bennett, Gloucestershire	35 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire	36 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire
37 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire	38 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire	39 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire	40 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire
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73 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire	74 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire	75 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire	76 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire
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89 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire	90 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire	91 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire	92 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire
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97 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire	98 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire	99 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire	100 J. Dalton, Gloucestershire

Gascoigne in new deal at Ibrox

Football

ALAN NICK HARRIS

Paul Gascoigne committed himself to Rangers for the rest of the century yesterday, signing a new three-year deal at Ibrox. The England midfielder player has also settled his differences with Brian Laudrup, who publicly criticised him for his behaviour off the field during the summer.

The biggest decision Gascoigne had to make was whether to remain north of the border despite requests from Glenn Hoddle, the England manager, to find a club nearer home.

The Liverpool manager, Roy Evans, said yesterday his plans to sign Paul Ince from Internazionale were at an advanced stage, but the deal had yet to be finalised. Evans denied speculation that the transfer of the 29-year-old to Anfield had already been completed, and said: "He's not here yet and there's a lot of work to be done."

that Le Saux was expected to play a major role in the club's pre-season build-up, which includes a Swedish tour next week. Le Saux, who said he felt unsettled last season, has been linked with several clubs this summer, with Arsenal and Juventus leading the interested parties. Hodgson said: "I spoke with Graeme on the phone while I was in Italy and again when I came over here a few weeks ago. He made it clear he had some reservations but he is contracted to the club and will start pre-season training with everyone else."

Sheffield United have still not received the compensation they are demanding from Everton after Howard Kendall switched clubs last week. The Blades' chairman, Mike McDonald, wants £1m from Everton and said that until the matter had been settled, he would be unable to appoint a successor to Kendall. He said: "Until [the compensation] is all completed satisfactorily then nothing will happen and only after it is all cleared up will we advertise the position."

Howard Kendall, meanwhile, denied reports that Fabrizio Ravanelli was on his way to Goodison, in exchange for £6m and David Unsworth, as "nonsense". Two Italians who are on their way

to Everton however, are teenage trialists Mauro Eposito, a mid-field player from Pescara, and Luigi Riccio, a defender from Perugia, who will spend two months at the club before Kendall decides whether to sign them on a permanent basis.

Spurs fans upset over the £3.5m sale of Teddy Sheringham to Manchester United are threatening legal action against the club's parent company for undervaluing the player. A spokesman for the Tottenham Action Group, which includes shareholders of Tottenham Hotspur PLC, said: "There is a total lack of credibility and integrity about the board and we don't know whether we are coming or going." Brighton have explained why they have still not paid the £500,000 bond (due two weeks ago) requested by the Football League as a safeguard against their future. Martin Perry, a member of the consortium that took over the club, said there was some concern that Brighton might pay the bond and still be expelled from the League at an extraordinary general meeting on 24 July. He added however, that solicitors are now rewording the demand and Brighton now expect to lodge the bond in time for the EGM.

Fifa faces EU challenge to transfer rules

The European Commission yesterday sent a shot across the bows of football's world governing body, warning that its transfer regulations contravened European Union laws.

The Commission said in a statement that a recent circular by Fifa "constitutes an unjustified obstacle to the free movement of workers." The Fifa "circular 616" was prompted by a row over the status in Europe of the Brazilian international striker, Ronaldo.

At a cost of over £17m, Ronaldo has attempted to buy his way out of a contract with Barcelona of Spain so that he can join Internazionale in Italy. Barcelona have objected to the move, saying transfers must be arranged between clubs and not individuals, and Fifa rules state that a player cannot buy out his contract for the purpose of obtaining an international transfer.

Yesterday's European Commission statement alleged that Fifa's circular appeared to maintain a system which had already been ruled illegal by the European Court of Justice, and that it appeared to contravene EU regulations.

GUIN

HOODLE

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Viking raider

Robin Nicholl on the Tour's dangerous Dane, page 23

sport

Grand master

Schumacher at full throttle in Monday's Sports Section

THIRD TEST: Spinner takes five as Australia take command

Warne's trickery torments England

Cricket

DEREK PRINGLE
reports from Old Trafford
Australia 235; England 161-8

The last time Shane Warne played against England at Old Trafford, he took a wicket with his very first ball in Ashes cricket. Yesterday he had to wait until his 43rd. But if the disparity says much about the wear and tear suffered by Warne's shoulder in the interim, the wreckage caused to the England innings was strangely familiar as Warne ended the day with 5 for 38 and England finished on 161 for 8, a deficit of 74.

Warne, a strangely subdued figure for the early part of this series, has clearly been a man waiting for the right pitch. Talk of sore finger joints - after surgery was performed 13 months ago - as well as a tired shoulder are all undoubtedly true and have taken their toll.

Yet given a surface that grips, as Old Trafford has here, and there are few better at demolishing an opponent and England will not be relishing the prospect of batting last against him on a pitch likely to offer him an increasing amount of turn.

He might not be able to make the ball rip and snarl as he did in the past but when it did turn yesterday, it did so just enough to find the edge, a far more profitable habit than beating it, which is what often happened in the past.

Bowling from the Warwick Road End - the same end from which he delivered that era-defining meteor to Mike Gatting in 1993 - Warne began with a ball that turned almost as alarmingly out of the rough, and barely bounced shin high as Mark Butcher squirmed it out to square leg.

If it was a harbinger of things

to come, it took its time and it was not until Alec Stewart edged to slip trying to turn a leg-break pitching in the rough to leg that the floodgates began to open, as England helped squander the hard-fought opening to their innings.

Until that moment Stewart and his brother-in-law, Butcher, had added 66 runs following Mike Atherton's dismissal, caught behind off his gloves hooking at Glean McGrath. Together the Surrey pair had edged soundly if a little slowly, having been troubled by little save a startling hesitancy in their running between the wickets.

Under some long overdue sun, the pitch had lost most of its early capriciousness, and England looked set to take a precious first-innings advantage, until Stewart, forced into error by the constant nagging drip of Warne's accuracy, allowed the Aussies in.

In some ways, Butcher's dismissal to Michael Bevan five

overs later was even more careless than Stewart's. Having just reached his second half-century in successive Test innings, he walked past a leg-side full toss and was brilliantly stumped by Ian Healy. It was Healy's 100th victim in Ashes Tests, a milestone reached only by Rod Marsh and Alan Knott, whose elite company the deserving Healy now keeps.

With Warne tightening the noose, it was a tally that did not stay static for long and both Nasser Hussain and John Crawley, fencing at balls that turned sharply, further added to the wicketkeeper's tally.

Robert Croft then completed a day for soft dismissals when he chipped McGrath to mid-off, where Steve Waugh made light of a difficult catch.

With Darren Gough's dismissal, lbw to Warne, England were left contemplating ruin until Mark Ealham, gaining confidence at every outing, combined sensibly with Andy Caddick. With Warne visibly

tiring, the pair added an unbeaten 38 for the ninth wicket. With every run vital, it is a partnership that Australia will put every effort into stemming today.

Before they batted, England had every reason to be pleased with the way their day had started after promptly wrapping up the Australian innings. Having conceded valuable ground on the first evening, when Steve Waugh and Paul Reiffel took advantage of some wayward bowling, the removal of Australia's three remaining wickets for just 11 runs should have proved a huge fillip for Atherton's men.

The buoyant early mood was epitomised by Gough who, charging in from the Salford End, finished the innings with three wickets, including that of Reiffel, whose 103-minute stay proved crucial for his team as he and Waugh put on 70 for the eighth wicket, a stand that will possibly be seen as the turning point should Australia win here and then go on to retain the Ashes.

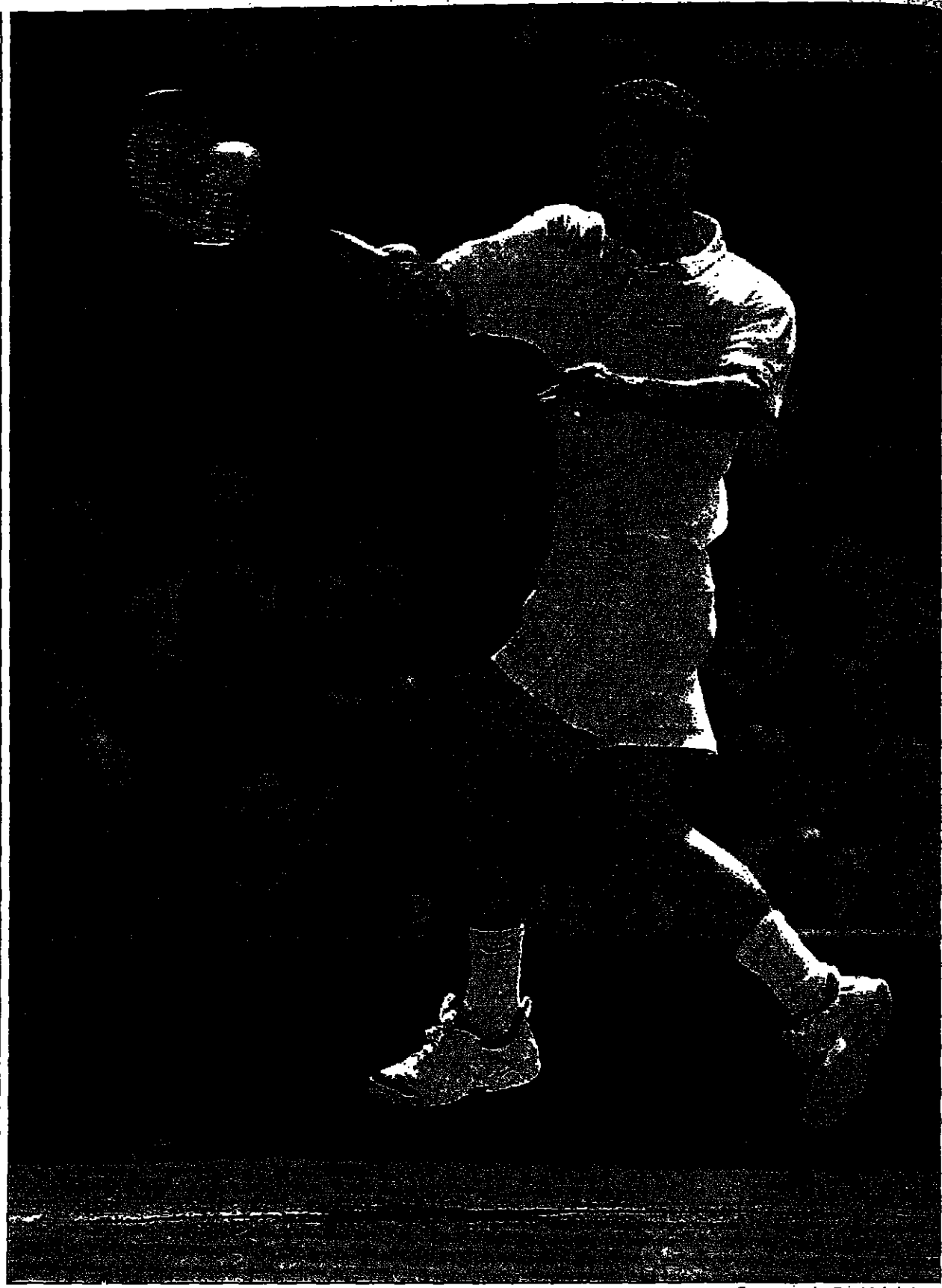
Considering the dire situation of his side and the sporty nature of the pitch, no praise is too high for Waugh's innings. Apparently he rates his century here as his finest ever. If so, he was strangely subdued yesterday, adding just five runs to his overnight score before inside-edging a Gough inswinger on to his stumps.

Three balls later, Jason Gillespie followed after slashing at Dean Headley. The edge, safely pounced by Stewart, was the Surrey man's sixth catch of the innings. It was a feat that equalled the Ashes record set by Jack Russell in Melbourne just over six years ago. Unfortunately for England, it was the only high point in an otherwise depressing day.

Jon Culley, Henry Blofeld, county cricket, page 28

Old Trafford scoreboard

AUSTRALIA won toss		
AUSTRALIA - First innings		
S R Waugh b Gough	106	
(103 min, 175 balls, 13 fours)		
P R Reiffel b Gough	31	
(103 min, 84 balls, 1 four)		
J N Gillespie c Stewart b Headley	15	
(13 min, 9 balls)		
G D McGrath not out	1	
(14 min, 2 balls)		
Extras (b4, lb3, nb2)	9	
Total (for 8, 322 min, 21 overs)	262	
Falls: 3-2 (Atherton, 2-74 (Stewart), 3-94 (Butcher), 4-101 (Hussain), 5-130 (Hussain), 6-111 (Crawley), 7-122 (Croft), 8-123 (Gough).		
To bat: D W Headley		
Bowling: McGrath 22-6-39-2 (8-3-15-1, 3-1-6-0, 3-0-7-0, 8-4-11-1); Reiffel 8-3-14-0 (22-6-39-2, 3-1-6-0, 3-1-6-0, 28-42-48-6 (5-1-10-0, 25-11-38-5); Gillespie 14-5-8-0 (10-0-12-0, 4-2-12-0); Bevan 8-3-14-1 (5-0-12-1, 3-2-2-0).		
Progress: Lancashire 37 for 1 (Butcher 17, Stewart 13) 15 overs, 90-108 min, 25.4 overs, 200-185 min, 45.4 overs, Test 110 for 4 (Hussain 12, Crawley 4) 48 overs, 156-288 min, 70.4 overs.		
Butcher's 50: 17 min, 137 balls, 5 fours, 10 fours, 70.4 overs.		
Unlabeled: G. Sharp (Eng) and S. Warne (Aus) (both).		
TV money: 100,000; 100,000; 100,000.		
Match referees: R S Madgwick.		



Pete Sampras takes to the air during his semi-final victory over Todd Woodbridge

Photograph: David Ashdown

Supreme Sampras puts Woodbridge out to grass

JOHN ROBERTS
reports from Wimbledon

There was a small historic moment on the Centre Court yesterday. Pete Sampras's serve was broken by Australia's Todd Woodbridge, a feat last performed by Sweden's Mikael Tillstrom in the first round, many rain delays ago.

Life has changed dramatically in SW19 since Tillstrom experienced that ray of hope in the fourth game. Two British men have appeared and disappeared in the quarter-finals. Boris Becker has taken his farewell bows. Martina Hingis has become the youngest finalist since Lottie Dod, and Sampras has enjoyed a sequence of 97 games without being broken.

Woodbridge brought Sampras's run to a close as a gesture of defiance before the American marked Independence Day by securing a place in Sunday's final, 6-2, 6-1, 7-6, after an hour and 45 minutes.

The Australian's break came immediately after he had lost his own serve to trail 1-2 in the third set. His reward was to force a tie-break, which Sampras won, 7-3, with the flourish of a service winner off a second serve.

For most of the match, Woodbridge appeared to be lacking something on his backhand side. It transpired to be the forehand of his doubles partner, Mark Woodforde, who was watching from the stands. Together, they form the sport's most successful duo, but Woodbridge was able to make little impression on the world No 1 as a solo act.

Were one needed, yesterday's match would have served as a timely reminder of Sampras's evolution as a Wimbledon champion, a three-times winner about to contest his fourth final in five years.

Sampras made his debut on the lawns of the All England Club in 1989. His compatriot, Michael Chang, had just become the youngest male to win a Grand Slam singles title, aged 17 years and three months, at the French Open.

Although roughly the same age as Chang, Sampras appeared less mature at the time. Although nobody doubted that had the attacking style to succeed on grass courts, he lacked confidence in his service returns on the surface.

His first match was against Woodbridge, a year older, the Australian taking advantage of Sampras's uncertainty, winning, 7-5, 7-6, 5-7, 6-3.

They met at Wimbledon a

second time in 1992. Sampras, a winner of the United States Open title two years earlier, had raised the level of his grass-court game sufficiently to overcome Woodbridge in four sets in the second game, en route to his first appearance in the semi-finals.

Since then, Sampras's only Wimbledon defeat has been against Richard Krajicek in the quarter-finals last year, the Dutchman advancing to win the title.

Well though Woodbridge had played to reach the last eight, particularly in denying his compatriot Pat Rafter in the fourth round, he was comprehensively outplayed by Sampras on this occasion.

It was not a case of Woodbridge being unable to put the American's serve under pressure until the closing stages, but one of Sampras having the skill confidence to swat away all but one of the break points almost at will.

Leading 3-1 in the opening set, Sampras suddenly found himself at 0-40 before serving his way out of difficulty with such ease that his opponent must have wondered how he would possibly find a way into the match.

Another opportunity came at 4-2, Sampras saving it with a service winner and then hold-

ing to take the set after 30 minutes, conscious, perhaps, that the dark clouds were gathering to make another attack on the tournament.

Sure enough, rain interrupted play for an hour after Sampras won the opening game of the second set. His coach, Paul Annacone, was slightly late returning to the players' guest box for the resumption, but he was able to pause at the entrance to the stand and admire Sampras's expertise in breaking Woodbridge from 0-40.

Sampras required only one more opening to crack the Australian's serve again with consecutive backhand passes to extend his lead to 5-1, saving one break point himself with a backhand volley before clinching the set after only 24 minutes.

While the crowd admired the apparent ease of the American's serve-volley style throughout the match, they were most impressed when he slipped early in a rally at the start of the third set and leapt up to win a closely-contested point.

"Today I played one of the greatest players who was playing great," Woodbridge said afterwards. "The way he serves a second ball is what sets him apart from other players. He places it on a dime."

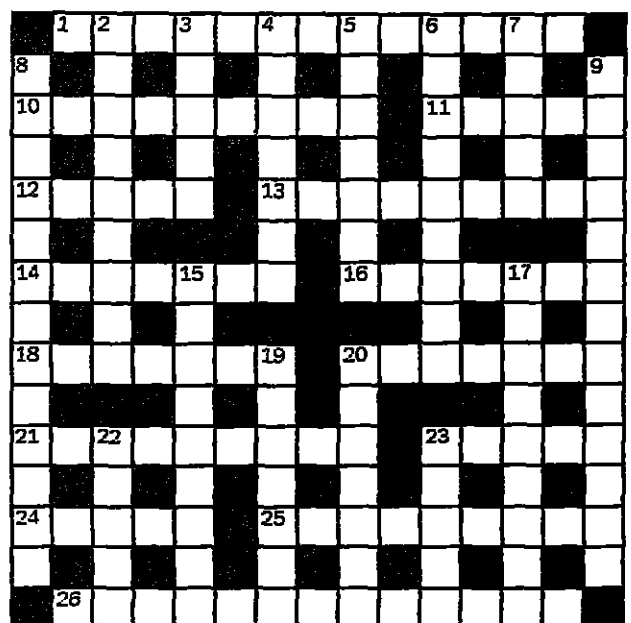
THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No 3343, Saturday 5 July

By Phil

ACROSS

DOWN



Friday's solution

BRUNCH BANKER
TOPOFTHEMORNING
RUFFAPOFA
AVERS TRUMPETER
VICTROLID
COMPLY ELAINE
OSTEND PAEANS
LESTVAES
AUSTERITY BLANK
CASHES TIOKA
UNINTENTIONALLY
NENGNGEE
AUGERS DOISER

Last Saturday's solution

ASPERSED SECT
TAEESMR
MANGEL PIGRATE
TEFORIT
DISEASES UNLOAD
UNDOU
SCIPPINGROPE
BICRG
MOSELI ARBITERS
CRTEIRCK
SPINNER UNFOLD
ANTISE
EROG EPHEMERA

- How the dictionary listing after "anu" resumes initially? (4,3,4,2)
- Record one's nervous responses as a result of organisational issues (9)
- Scandinavian run gone round by runner? (5)
- Abruptly interpose a couple of metals (3,2)
- Toils on Al, working in solitude (9)
- Argue against the Bar? (7)
- Walked a long way and found entrance to tomb ruined, we hear (7)
- Quiet finale on the way (7)
- Mixture - such as may be made by man with glee? (7)
- Henry in time-consuming start to supper, producing cups, plates, etc. (3-6)
- Put most of letters next to editor (5)
- Deal's closed - but it's a gamble (5)
- I've done my bit, and I say it's a load of balls! (4,2,3)
- Soreness obtained from dancing a Spanish dance (5,3,5)
- Motoring manoeuvre? Just go for it! (5,4)
- Mother's working as a type of builder (5)
- Top of head more exposed to the atmosphere? Not if it's this! (7)
- Failure to get damp clothes on the line? (4-3)
- Chime with something in the memory? (4,1,4)
- It's found in Petersburg or Kiev or some other Russian city (5)
- What "STOP BIG CITIES" displays? (5,8)
- Girl had to peruse almost entire cheap comic (5,8)
- It's found in ham, boar's head and in the hog, possibly (5-4)
- Monarch with cunning taking both sides of Northern town (5,4)
- Boat's almost finished shifting load (7)
- I'm upset over Pip throttling old copper - it's a crime! (7)
- Father shuns frenzied caper (5)
- Favoured artist depicts historic city (5)

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hand-drawn copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canaan Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: A Freeman, Wotton-at-Stone; P St. Lawrence, Dublin; E King & J Keith, S. Woodford; G Madgwick, Norwich; E Buckingham.

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HER BEST FOREHAND IS ON HER BACKHAND SIDE 77

VIRGINIA WADE

NOT EVERYTHING IN BLACK AND WHITE MAKES SENSE. GUINNESS

صكزا من الامثل